

CITY OF WESTMINSTER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



WESTMINSTER

ADOPTION DRAFT

September 02, 2021

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CITY COUNCIL

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David DeMott, Mayor Pro Tem
Rich Seymour
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Jon Voelz

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Chennou Xiong (Alternate)

CITY STAFF

Don Tripp, City Manager
Barbara Opie, Deputy City Manager
Jody Andrews, Deputy City Manager
Larry Dorr, Deputy City Manager
Dave Downing, Community Development Director
Rita McConnell, AICP, Planning Manager
Andrew Spurgin, AICP, Long Range Planner, Project Manager
Sean McCartney, City Urban Designer

Westminster Forward Team

Nicole Ankeney, Parks, Recreation and Libraries
Sarah Borgers, Public Works and Utilities
Kristina Evanoff, Community Development
Megan Orloff, Public Works and Utilities
Paul Schmiechen, City Manager's Office

Contributing Staff

Stephanie Ashmann, Community Development
Jennifer Baden, Community Development
Debra Baskett, Community Development
Drew Beckwith, Public Works and Utilities
Erik Birk, Fire Department
John Burke, Economic Development
Patrick Caldwell, Community Development
Karen Creager, Finance Department
Kristin Decker, City Attorney's Office
Chase Evans, Economic Development
Karen Gay, City Manager's Office

Contributing Staff Continued

Dave German, Community Development
Christine Gray, Public Works and Utilities
Andrew Hawthorne, Community Development
Ryan Hegreness, City Manager's Office
Dave Horras, Community Development
Amy Johnson, Community Development
Caroline Joy, Economic Development
Jacob Kasza, Community Development
Fred Kellam, City Manager's Office
Max Kirschbaum, Public Works and Utilities
Heath Klein, Community Development
Julie Koehler, Public Works and Utilities
Bob Krugmire, Public Works and Utilities
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Dave Lester, Police Department
Chris Lindsey, City Manager's Office
Dave Loseman, Community Development
Kristen May, Parks, Recreation and Libraries
John McConnell, Community Development
Anjelica McMahon, General Services
Andrew Mintun, Parks, Recreation and Libraries
Logan Morley, Community Development
Greg Moser, Emergency Management Coordinator
Rich Neumann, Parks, Recreation and Libraries
Tom Ochtera, General Services
Aric Otzelberger, Community Development
Seth Plas, Community Development
Hans Reichgelt, Parks, Recreation and Libraries
Kate Skarbek, Parks, Recreation and Libraries
Sarah Stehr, Community Development
Molly Tayer, Economic Development
Stephanie Troller, Economic Development
John Vann, Parks, Recreation and Libraries
Josh Vaughn, Community Development
Sherri Young, Finance Department

Former Staff

Gabriella Arismendi
Jodie Carroll
Jason Genck
Jenni Grafton
Stephen Grooters
John Hall
Derek Minard
Sarah Nurmela
Kathy Piper
Joe Reid
Katie Schwarz
Angela Simental
Jonathan Thornton
Patti Wright

PROJECT CONSULTANTS

Logan Simpson

Felsburg, Holt & Ullevig (FHU)

Root Policy Research

Gruen Gruen + Associates

TischlerBise

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Mayor and City Council

Anita Seitz, Mayor
David DeMott, Mayor Pro Tem
Rich Seymour, City Council
Kathryn Skulley, City Council
Lindsey Smith, City Council
Jon Voelz, City Council
Herb Atchison, Former Mayor
Michelle Haney, Former City Council
Sheela Mahnke, Former City Council

Planning Commission

Donald Anderson, Planning Commission

City Staff

Nicole Ankeny, Parks, Recreation and Libraries
Sarah Borgers, Public Works and Utilities
Dave Downing, Community Development
Jenni Grafton, Economic Development
Stephen Grooters, Public Works and Utilities
John Hall, Economic Development
Jacob Kasza, Community Development
Kristin May, Parks, Recreation and Libraries
Greg Moser, Emergency Management
Sarah Nurmela, Economic Development
Barbara Opie, Deputy City Manager
Paul Schmiechen, City Manager's Office
Kate Skarbek, Parks, Recreation and Libraries
Don Tripp, City Manager
Patti Wright, Parks, Recreation and Libraries

Other Stakeholders

Wendi Birchler
Rich Chamberlain
Bill Kearney
Charlie McKay
Erin Mooney
Susan Stanton
Dino Valente

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1.0

INTRODUCTION AND VISION

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan is an official policy document of the City of Westminster. The Comprehensive Plan establishes a consistent statement of the city's plans and policies for future development, and is meant to be a living document that is updated over time to respond to changing conditions and the evolving needs of the community. All parts of the Plan, in conjunction with partner plans, work together towards the realization of the city's vision for the future.

This chapter provides information about development of the Plan, the legal foundation and relationship to other city planning efforts, establishes guiding principles for the Plan document, and highlights planning influences critical to Plan formation and its 2040 planning horizon.

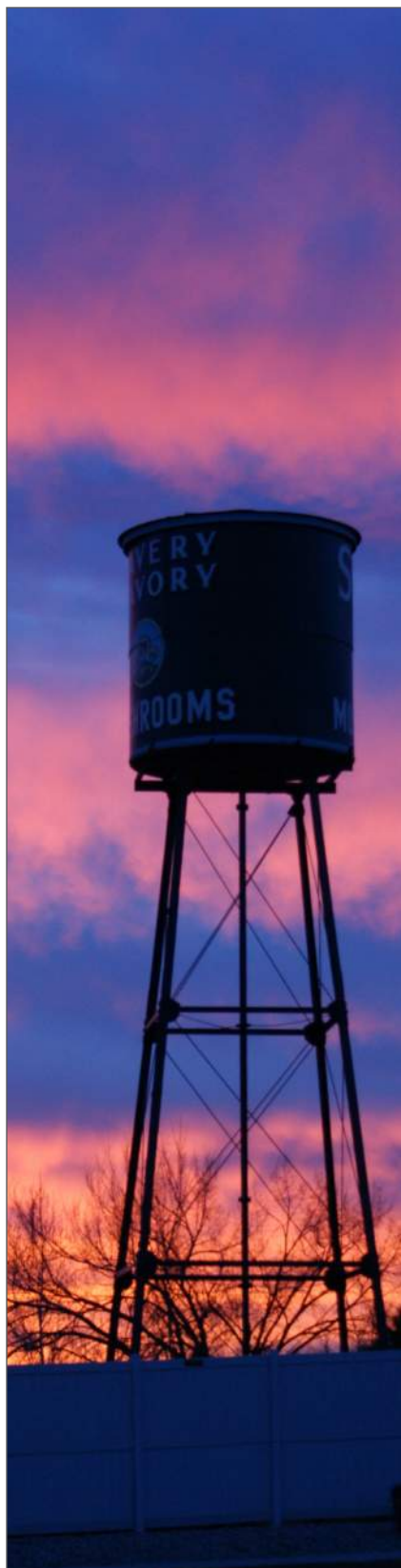


Photo: Anton Mayer

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan is one of a group of long-term planning efforts to create the framework for the future of Westminster. Five plans were developed concurrently with the Comprehensive Plan and are integral to achieve the city's Vision: Parks, Recreation and Libraries Plan; Transportation and Mobility Plan; Sustainability Plan; Water Supply Plan; and a sixth project — Code Forward — to update municipal codes relative to development to ensure the goals and policies of the *Westminster Forward* plans are actionable relative to land development.

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan outlines the community's vision for the future through a framework of goals and policies that support a thriving and healthy community comprised of great neighborhoods. The Comprehensive Plan (referred to as the Plan through the remainder of this document) establishes guidance to help move closer to the community's vision. The long-range policies of the Plan provide a basis for evaluating specific development opportunities and public projects, with coordination among all city departments. Plan policies also provide the basis for establishing and setting priorities for more detailed plans and implementation programs including specific and area plans, the Capital Improvement Program, and the Unified Development Code. The achievement of the vision and goals of the Plan relies on guidance and decision-making of the city Council and implementation by city staff and many other local and regional partners.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN UPDATE

The last significant update to the city's Comprehensive Plan occurred in 2013. Since this update, the city, economy, and development trends have evolved significantly. The previous Plan was noteworthy for its departure from the "maximum flexibility" approach of the earlier 2004 Plan and replaced this paradigm with strategic growth at key locations that can be supported by current and future infrastructure. The 2013 Plan established five Focus Areas described to receive the majority of future development and change: Downtown Westminster, Brookhill, Westminster Station, Church Ranch and North I-25. By directing larger-scale new development to Focus Areas, a framework is in place to guide development and allocate resources to support these areas while minimizing impacts to established residential neighborhoods. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan builds on these concepts with updated goals and policies relative to growth at strategic locations, proactively addressing changing demographics and employment trends, and supporting neighborhoods.



Noteworthy accomplishments since the adoption of the 2013 Plan include:

- Completion of Specific Plans for Downtown Westminster and Westminster Station and completion of several large projects in both areas, as well as civic facilities and programming for public uses.
- Regional Transportation District (RTD) transit enhancements with the Flatiron Flyer bus rapid transit service along the US 36 corridor, the operation of the commuter rail service on the B line to Westminster Station, and the introduction of microtransit service to the North I-25 Focus Area.
- Activation of regional centers including Church Ranch and Orchard Town Center through the addition of residential, hospitality, restaurants, and experiential retail.
- Significant additions to the city's employment base through expansions and relocations of major firms such as Ball, Maxar, Swisslog, and Trimble.
- Development and diversification of additional affordable housing in multiple locations.
- Successful capacity building and technical assistance to the Historic Westminster area including branding, marketing, new investments, and a plan for the Harris Park neighborhood.

A number of considerations for future planning have contributed to the need for an update to the Plan. These include:

- Reassessment of appropriate development and uses for the less than 1,100 acres of remaining undeveloped land, as well as redevelopment in areas such as Brookhill and the Westminster Station Area.
- Completion of Housing Needs Assessments in 2017 and 2020 identifying how the gap between household incomes and home prices and rents has continued to widen and the need for more diverse and affordable options.
- A changing retail landscape that challenges many established retail formats and alters the physical needs for these types of businesses.
- Consideration of new business practices and changing technologies such as ride sharing, co-working spaces, online retail, home sharing, and evolving entertainment programming and social networking.
- Reevaluation of the city's ability to provide services in consideration of aging infrastructure, water supply, and the city's financial sustainability.
- Changing demographics with consideration for the needs of the growing senior population and the underserved disabled population.
- Acknowledging the city's commitment to inclusivity and recognizing the growth of the Hispanic/Latinx community.
- Reevaluation of annexation plans in consideration of actions by adjacent municipalities, infrastructure availability, fiscal impacts and key opportunities to advance city goals.
- Increased concern to plan for public health and wellness, including food access, mental health services, and multimodal travel options.

These factors require alignment of all physical planning efforts in the city in order to ensure a high quality of life, as well as fiscal and economic sustainability.

1.2 A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PLAN

Input from city officials, as well as community stakeholders, local and regional agencies, and the overall Westminster community, was a key element of the planning process. As part of the coordinated community engagement process, known as *Westminster Forward*, the Comprehensive Plan team joined five other concurrent city planning efforts to integrate activities and public participation across disciplines.

The Plan update process kicked off in Summer 2018, with the Imagine Westminster event, stakeholder and agency interviews, and the first online survey. This initial phase focused on understanding key issues, opportunities, and challenges that would influence policy direction in the Plan. The most common themes that were initially brought up centered on sustainably managing resources, balancing urban and suburban environments, and being an inclusive community. Responses showed that the Westminster community values the parks, recreation, open space, trail network and mountain views in Westminster, while indicating that improvements could be made in regard to transit service, walkability, and support for local businesses. Input from the public and city staff helped articulate the key components of the city vision, which were then translated into the Plan's Guiding Principles.

Online questionnaires, public event activities, and city staff workshops helped identify areas in the city that had the most opportunity for new development, infill or redevelopment. These areas were analyzed based on quantitative and qualitative data and were referenced consistently throughout the planning process to understand future desired character and how city policies and strategies might influence these areas. This analysis and process updated the Focus Areas and highlighted additional Transition Areas that merit special considerations for future planning.

Going into 2019, city staff continued the process to actively engage Westminster's residents, business owners, and local and regional partners to assist with the development of city policies. With the preliminary visioning priorities and opportunities identified, the outreach activities were constructed to dive deeper into each issue. Questionnaire results, written comments, and in-person discussions were synthesized and insights translated into the Plan's goals, policies, and potential strategic actions. This process took an iterative approach with multiple city staff workshops focusing on each section of the Plan and revisions to the Future Land Use Diagram. Ultimately, these draft goals and policies were presented for public review in 2021.



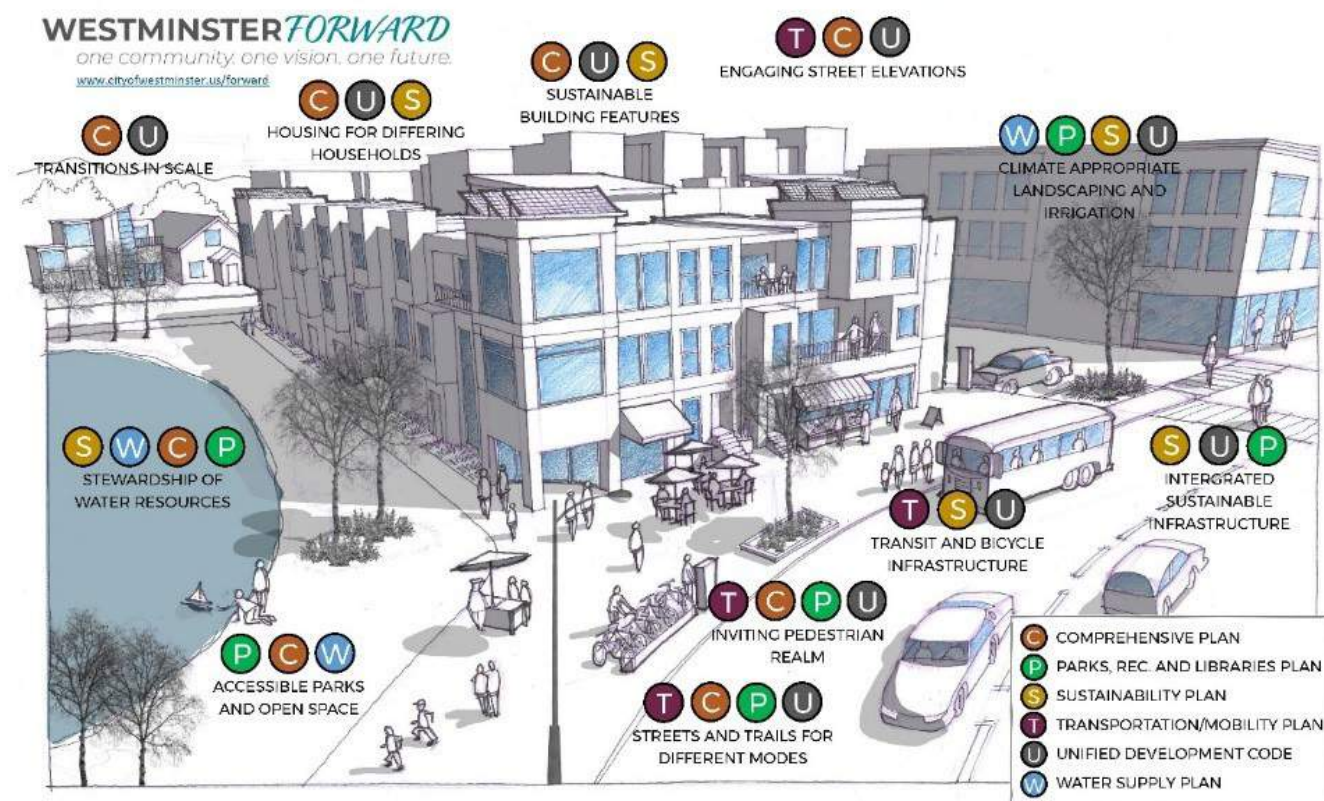
Latino Festival 2019



Direct involvement with city officials was also an essential element of this planning process. At major milestones of Plan development, City Council and Planning Commission provided input and direction. All documents, presentations and analysis produced during the planning process, including presentations to the Council, were posted on the city's Comprehensive Plan webpage.

PLANNING PROCESS BY THE NUMBERS

- 12 Public Events
- 10 Small Community Meetings
- 7 Online Activities
- 54 Interviews
- 6 Study Sessions with City Council and Planning Commission
- 15 City Staff Meetings
- 20,000+ Unique Website Views
- 9 City Edition articles



1.3 VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

CITY OF WESTMINSTER VISION

The Westminster City Council has established a vision for the future. This vision provides a foundation for this Comprehensive Plan.

We are a thriving community of safe neighborhoods and beautiful open space that is sustainable and inclusive.

The intent of the Comprehensive Plan is to manage growth to support a thriving and healthy community comprised of great neighborhoods. The following guiding principles, in alignment with the City of Westminster Vision, serve as the platform for the goals and policies of this Plan. They express a community vision for Westminster's continued growth and further evolution into an active, diverse, and livable city.

THRIVING CITY

Westminster has a strong identity that values being bold, innovative, and different. We promote diversity and inclusiveness, and celebrate cultural and artistic expression.

Westminster is a community recognized along the Front Range for its extensive open space network, well-designed infrastructure, and high-quality built environment. The Plan will continue to emphasize the community's identity and presence both locally and regionally. The continuation of small business support throughout the city and programming of arts and cultural activities, as well as the infusion of private investment and new development in Focus Areas, will enhance the community's image and establish it as a desirable place to live, conduct business, recreate, and visit. The Plan also emphasizes the city's natural amenities and views to the mountains and Downtown Denver as distinctive qualities to be preserved and celebrated. Finally, Westminster will continue to develop and strengthen its identity through special events, embracing diversity and a sense of belonging for all voices within the community.

Westminster cultivates a diverse, healthy, and resilient economy with an emphasis on financial sustainability, leveraging the city's role in the region and adapting to changing trends and technologies.

With its central location between Denver and Boulder, the City of Westminster is strategically positioned to capitalize on economic growth opportunities along the US 36 technology corridor, as well as the northern I-25 corridor linking Denver to Fort Collins and beyond. The Denver metro region is growing and attracting new talent, presenting opportunities for Westminster to expand and diversify the city's unique neighborhoods, open space and recreational amenities, as well as access to transit, make Westminster a desirable place in which to live, work and visit. Furthermore, the proximity to Denver and Boulder provides an ideal location for employers wishing to attract and retain a high-quality labor force. Building on the city's assets, the Plan will focus on growth and diversification of the city's employment and commercial bases to create a resilient local economy. Employment development efforts will focus on establishing and reinforcing business and industry clusters, allowing for flexibility to adapt to the next generation of jobs, workspace, and technologies.



HEALTHY PLACES

Westminster has a built environment that embraces the outdoors through a comprehensive, integrated parks and open space system.

Westminster's pattern of development protects the network of open space, trails and high-quality parks, and defines the physical character and image of the community. The extensive network of trails, open space corridors, and conservation areas weaves through the fabric of the city, connecting with parks, neighborhoods, schools, community facilities, employment centers and activity districts. Residents, workers and visitors have access to a range of recreation opportunities and benefit from the protection of sensitive environmental habitats, water quality, and view corridors. The network also connects residents to regional trails, on-street pedestrian and bicycle routes, neighboring jurisdictions, and transit stations in support of air quality. The Comprehensive Plan supports active living through both recreational and multi-modal travel opportunities.

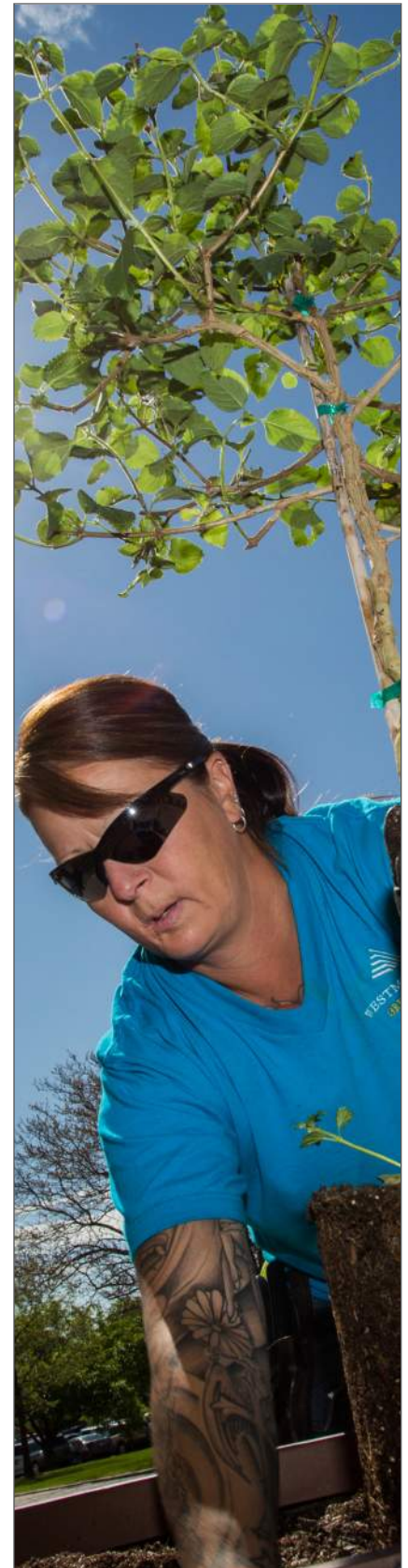
Westminster strives to be one of the most sustainable, safe, and healthy cities in America.

Westminster enjoys a high quality of life that is supported by a sense of safety and confidence throughout the community. The ability to enjoy the city's natural amenities, residential neighborhoods, employment and activity centers, and transit connections in a safe, secure environment is a key priority. Being a sustainable community means ensuring that Westminster is a desirable place in which to live, work, visit, and play for current and future generations. Additionally, the Plan supports the ability of police and fire departments to maintain high standards for service response and emergency preparedness. The Plan will promote access to a healthy lifestyle by promoting connectivity to and use of the city's open space, trail and park network; a wide range of recreation and library facilities for all ages and abilities; and ensuring residents and workers have access to health and human services and nutritious foods.

GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS

Westminster has a strong sense of local pride in our well-designed and attractive neighborhoods.

Westminster is defined by its distinctive and varied neighborhoods and integrated network of parks and trails. The city's range of choices and character in neighborhoods provides a diverse mix of settings and environments—from single-family residences in pastoral settings to mixed-use live/work and multifamily dwellings in walkable settings. The Plan will continue to foster a range of high-quality living options that support the city's active lifestyle. Parks, recreation facilities, libraries, neighborhood shopping and services, schools, and other community facilities will serve the needs of residents, reinforcing neighborhood character and cultural identity. Connections from residential neighborhoods to employment centers, transit, commercial centers, and the city's



NEIGHBORHOOD UNIT

One of the strategies to ensure the Guiding Principles are followed through in future investments by the city and private parties is the “Neighborhood Unit.” Through *Westminster Forward* public engagement there was a preference for mixed-use development patterns, but in strategic locations and composition. Diversity of housing types—supported by nearby activities such as restaurants, retail and a park for community gathering—was identified as an element of the ideal neighborhood. This involves incorporating parks as social spaces and civic hubs. There was also an interest in walkable, well-connected environments with smaller, neighborhood services closer to housing. Westminster neighborhoods should also plan to address changing demographics and associated housing needs for households with various compositions and multiple generations.

For more details about how to implement the Neighborhood Unit concept, see chapter 3: Land Use & Development.

open space and trails system will be emphasized. Where new neighborhoods are planned, a mix of uses, range of residential types, and interconnected street network will further foster an active, walkable environment throughout the city.

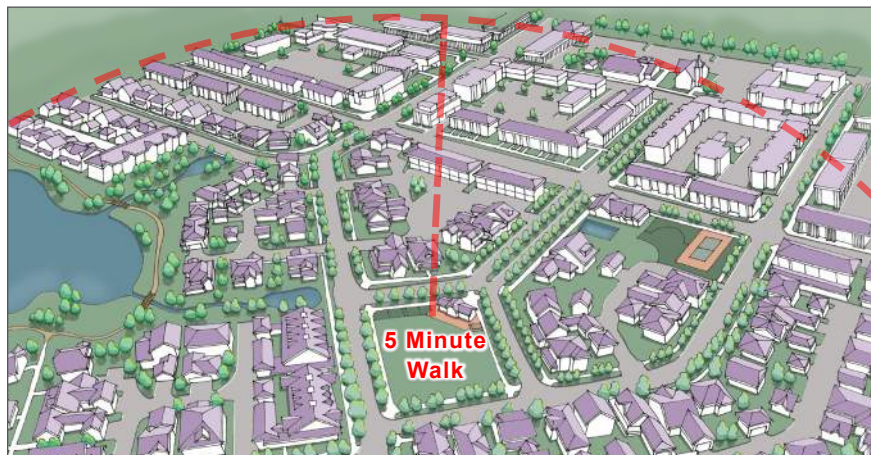
Westminster is a leader in affordable housing, providing a balanced mix of housing opportunities for a range of incomes, age groups, and lifestyle choices.

Providing a balanced mix of housing opportunities in the city will continue to be a focus of planning efforts. Accommodating a wide range of incomes, age groups, and lifestyle choices will reinforce the city’s identity as a diverse, attractive place in which to live and work. The Plan will focus on maintaining the quality of the existing housing inventory and expanding the diversity of housing options and supply, as well as locating complementary land uses and infrastructure to serve the needs of all community members. Policies that integrate housing with economic opportunity, social equity, inclusive practices, and attention to the physical and mental health of residents will be supported throughout the Plan.

MANAGED GROWTH

Westminster is a mature city that will continue to evolve and thrive through targeted infill and redevelopment opportunities.

The city is quickly approaching its physical build out of existing vacant land. As Westminster continues to evolve and grow, much of the future development will result as infill or redevelopment. The Plan provides a framework for balancing growth with preservation of established neighborhoods. New mixed-use development will be focused at locations with access to a supporting transportation system and transit. Attention will be paid to fostering an active public realm with blocks sized for walkability, building design that shapes and activates the pedestrian environment, and parks and public spaces that reinforce and foster community identity. Supporting policies and implementation efforts will ensure future neighborhoods are vibrant and viable.



*Neighborhood Unit
conceptual illustration*



Westminster supports an inclusive and comprehensive multimodal transportation network that provides safe and well-connected transportation and mobility choices to connect people to local and regional destinations.

The City of Westminster supports a comprehensive transportation system that allows for safe and efficient travel for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. The Westminster Transportation & Mobility Plan provides a framework for travel through the city with a network of streets, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and trails. The Comprehensive Plan integrates land use and transportation planning efforts to ensure mobility options throughout the city. The existing street network will be maintained and improved for safety and comfort of users. New street and trail connections and alignments will ensure the city's employment and activity centers are easy to access both locally and regionally. "First Mile, Final Mile" concepts will be supported by bicycle and pedestrian connections to transit stations, as well as development adjacent to stations, which will support and encourage transit ridership within the city.

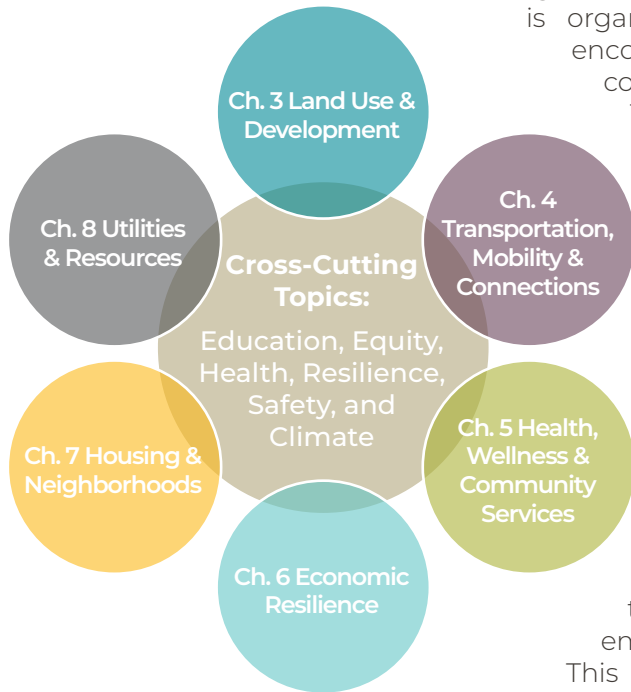
Westminster responsibly manages water and natural resources, prioritizing environmental stewardship and understanding feasibility of infrastructure and resource availability.

The city's growth management program and conservation of resources, including water, energy, habitat, and natural areas, provide the framework for a sustainable environment that will continue to impact all aspects of physical planning in the city. The Plan emphasizes conservation and management of the city's water supply, with policies and land use planning that will maintain water availability at citywide buildout. Because Westminster is largely built out, the sustainability and resiliency of existing neighborhoods will become a more central focus as development of the few remaining vacant lands becomes less critical with time. In the few locations where new development is anticipated the city will encourage the efficient use of land and resources. These measures will all contribute to environmental quality and public health.



1.4 PLAN THEMES & CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

In alignment with the guiding principles and vision, the Plan is organized by six themes. Each of these themes is encompassed in a chapter of the Plan, which includes context and background and set of goals and policies. Through the *Westminster Forward* planning process, six additional topics were identified that impact each of the Comprehensive Plan themes. These cross-cutting topics are integrated within each theme chapter.



CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS



Education

The City of Westminster is committed to equitable access to education in a number of ways, even as the city does not have direct authority over school districts or educational institutions. Many municipal facilities, departments, and programs are dedicated to supporting literacy, community engagement and empowerment, and public outreach and education. This includes the Westminster library system but also the city's recreation programs for educational enrichment, interpretive and educational signs in natural areas, and even public education campaigns related to recycling, water conservation, and hazard mitigation. The city also supports workforce training through partnerships and scholarships for employees of small businesses. This Plan supports opportunities for lifelong learning, workforce training, and personal growth, as well as the technology, infrastructure, and built environment necessary to support these opportunities.



Equity – Diversity and Inclusion

The 2020 update to the city's vision statement maintains the city's commitment to inclusivity. As part of the Welcoming America's *Welcoming Cities and Counties Initiative*, the City of Westminster strives to be more than merely diverse—it strives for inclusion. With the formation of the Inclusivity Board in 2015, a dedication to ensuring that all people can take part in economic, civic, and social life became a standard to embed in planning efforts. Equity requires that residents, business-owners, and workers be treated with respect, fairness and equality of services. Inclusion extends to race, immigration status, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identification or expression, religion, national origin, age, or physical or mental ability.



As Westminster's population grows, the city is gaining greater diversity in its residents from a cultural perspective. This includes residents born in another country or whose parents were born in another country, speak a language other than English at home, or identify as Hispanic/Latinx. (See section 1.4 Macro Trends for more information and planning implications.) To address the future needs of the city, preferences and specific challenges for various populations need to be considered. Westminster is making strides in the right direction, with the city being awarded second place in the National League of Cities' 2017 Cultural Diversity Awards for the development of the Westminster Inclusivity Board and its advocacy for all voices within our community. Considerations such as cultural expectations, age, and physical and mental ability are necessary in order to create a sense of community, inclusive and welcoming neighborhoods, and appropriate housing and facilities that serve the diverse city population.



Health

The City of Westminster is committed to the health, safety, and wellbeing of its residents. Public health is closely linked to the intentional design practices and land use planning which increase public safety and opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating. Specifically, this Plan emphasizes the interrelationship between the built environment and public health by focusing on policy questions such as how land use supports active transportation; how neighborhood design and development patterns improve walkability and safe, convenient pedestrian access to services like schools, parks, healthcare, and fresh food; how parks, open space and trails can connect to bicycle and pedestrian systems; and how land use can improve transit access, especially for those most in need.

The 2019 American Community Survey shows that 10.5%—11,865 persons—of the city's population have at least one disability. An even higher percentage of those over age 65 report some type of a disability, with 34% or 5,053 seniors living with a disability that requires planning for access to essential services and amenities. Not all disabilities are visible or related to mobility impairments, so while it is important to consider physical mobility and accessibility, it is also critical to make allowances for sensory impairments and cognitive disabilities.

This Plan integrates health language and policies that resonate locally, creating opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to make choices that allow them to live a long, healthy life. An improved built environment leads to improved public health at the community level. The Plan also provides support for factors that influence health like aging in place, walkable/bikeable neighborhoods, and easy access to daily goods and services, all of which ultimately contribute to reduced healthcare costs.



Photo credit: Gena Bloemendaal



Parking Lot Bioswale



Resilience

Residents all along the Front Range are accustomed to change. A booming population, shifting demographics, economic cycles, and the threats of natural disasters are among the myriad factors to which residents must continually anticipate and adapt to regionally. While community resilience is typically defined as the ability to bounce back and adapt to shocks and stresses, these disruptive events can be felt in the physical environment as well as in the pocketbook. As an institution, Westminster strives to maintain its fiscal resilience despite the low points in economic cycles. Westminster also pro-actively plans for natural hazards, primarily through the Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP), which identifies the range of hazards and prioritizes strategies to mitigate those risks.

In the context of city's infrastructure, including utilities, streets and drainage, resiliency refers to the ability of the systems (including their interconnected natural processes and social systems) to absorb disturbance and still retain functionality and structural capacity. Essential maintenance of the system must be maintained to ensure public safety and resiliency from hazards and disruptions. Westminster is currently at a crossroads: most of the city was developed in the 1970s and 1980s, and the infrastructure established at that time is nearing the end of its useful life and will be less reliable without extensive repair and replacement work to ensure safe operations in future years. As the city nears buildout, there will be less opportunity to collect tap fees from new development. As Westminster transitions from this development-driven system to that of rate payers contributing the bulk of revenue, financial challenges will need to be reconciled to ensure reliability of essential infrastructure in future years.

Planning for community resiliency is a dynamic cycle that must build on past experiences, while also preparing the community to respond and adapt to future opportunities, changes, and threats. Not only is community resiliency the ability to recover after a change such as a disaster event, but it is also enhancing the ability of Westminster's people, places, and economy to prepare for and thrive when change occurs. It involves activities such as supporting the health of natural systems like watersheds and air; managing and reinforcing elements of the built environment such as utility infrastructure, mobility, and buildings; and strengthening the economic and social fabric of the community.



Safety

Working to ensure a safe and secure living and working environment is a priority for Westminster, as “safe neighborhoods” are a component of the city’s vision statement. This is reflected in the support and partnerships with the municipal police and fire departments, but extends also to Westminster’s built environment—how we build transportation connections and our public spaces, and where we locate critical infrastructure.

A multimodal transportation network includes all the ways people move around the city. It is important to provide a transportation system that is safe and comfortable for all users, focusing on minimizing conflicts between cars, transit, bikes, and pedestrians. This understanding is introduced in the Comprehensive Plan and further articulated in the Transportation & Mobility Plan.

The practice of ensuring a safe community also extends to disaster preparedness and the resiliency of critical infrastructure. Assessment and mitigation of risks are key roles for the city in land use and emergency management planning, whether that means locating municipal facilities out of the floodplain, or regulating building codes for fire protection.



Climate

The City of Westminster is committed to being an environmentally responsible city and in 2019 completed its first ever greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory as part of the planning process for the Sustainability Plan. Increasing GHG emissions lead to climate change, which can significantly affect human and environmental health, along with economic and social well-being. Warmer temperatures lead to heat waves and increased concentrations of air and water pollutants, and can exacerbate demand impacts on water supply. Given the city’s proximity to the foothills and extensive open space, portions of the city are at risk for wildfires from steadily rising temperatures and a drier climate.

The city’s residents are also affected by increasing air pollution from vehicle emissions and other sources. Key findings from the GHG inventory indicate that emissions from on-road transportation (emissions from gasoline and diesel vehicles), building electricity (burning fossil fuels to produce electricity) and natural gas consumption are the three largest sources of emissions. Together these sources comprise 86% of total emissions. Most of the remaining emission sources are from aviation (estimated air travel for Westminster residents from Denver International Airport). Managing air pollution and developing climate change resilience is critical to the human, economic, and environmental health of communities.

By understanding how the community contributes to GHG emissions and poor air quality, changes can be made in daily activities that can positively impact the climate and reduce air



Westminster Firefighter



Gateway Feature

pollutants. Air quality may be enhanced using multiple techniques, such as expanding the urban tree canopy, providing convenient multimodal transportation options and alternative vehicle fueling infrastructure, and incorporating green building practices and green infrastructure (e.g., natural stormwater features) throughout the community. The strategies and actions identified in the Sustainability Plan can lead to reduction in GHG emissions. These are complemented throughout the Comprehensive Plan with goals and policies that support a mix of land uses serviced by multimodal transportation, sustainable development practices that reduce carbon footprints in businesses, access to health resources and recreation opportunities, and convenient access to places of employment and services to fulfill the daily needs of residents.

1.5 HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

ORGANIZATION

The Guiding Principles introduced in Section 1.3 establish the long-term aspirations for what the Comprehensive Plan is intended to accomplish. In any instance where an aspect of the Plan is unclear, the Guiding Principles should be liberally interpreted to inform the desired action. The chapters of the Plan organize content around common topic areas. Chapters 3 through 8 reflect goals and policies related to the *Westminster Forward* themes introduced in Section 1.4. These chapters each begin with a narrative of background information, current conditions and trends, and considerations for future planning. After the narrative, each chapter is organized around a series of goals and policies. While the narrative provides context, the goals and policies have priority in interpreting and applying the Plan over other content. Goals are broad statements to help realize the Guiding Principles. Policies define subcomponents of each goal with more specific recommendations to achieve the goals.

A separate implementation action plan has been developed to complement this document. It identifies future actions the city and non-city partners may undertake to carry out Plan concepts. Because of the frequency of updates to the action plan based on budgets, workplan priorities, staff capacity, and external variables, that document is maintained outside of this Plan.



Chapter 1: Introduction & Vision includes the purpose and overall planning context for the Plan, as well as the guiding principles that provide the framework for the goals and policies in the following chapters.



Chapter 2: Community Places provides a planning framework for key areas in the city, and references specific area plans that include more specific goals and policies to guide future planning and development in these areas.



Chapter 3: Land Use & Development provides direction for a balanced mix of land uses, sustainable design, development standards and regional collaboration. This chapter includes high-level direction for this element, with more detailed standards for development included with Code Forward.



Chapter 4: Transportation, Mobility & Connections includes direction for all modes of travel in the city, ensuring that vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit movement is balanced and coordinated. This chapter includes high-level direction for this element, with more detailed goals, actions, and policies included within the city's Transportation & Mobility Plan.



Chapter 5: Health, Wellness & Community Services outlines the framework for provision, creation, and maintenance of parks, open space, recreation and library facilities, and arts and culture in the city. This chapter also identifies needs associated with schools, health and human services, and public safety. Chapter 5 includes high-level direction for this element, with more detailed goals, actions, and policies included within the Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan.



Chapter 6: Economic & Financial Resilience establishes high-level economic goals and introduces financial policies to promote economic health, opportunity and diversity in the community that are necessary to generate the revenue to maintain a stable fiscal base at the municipal level, ensuring long-term financial sustainability.



Chapter 7: Housing & Neighborhoods supplements policies in the Sustainability Plan relative to neighborhood services and addressing housing needs with additional context on city identity and heritage.



Chapter 8: Utilities & Resources outlines policies to support the sustainability and resiliency of existing and future neighborhoods with the provision and availability of city utilities, infrastructure systems and public service. Functional plans that supplement these policies include the Sustainability Plan, Water Efficiency Plan, and Water Supply Plan.



Chapter 9: Plan Administration delineates the applicability, administration and toolkit of city programs that are interrelated with the Comprehensive Plan.



WHO CAN USE THIS PLAN?

A wide range of users will find meaning in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Westminster residents and property owners, businesses and developers, and city staff, leaders, and partners all use the Comprehensive Plan to guide and realize the future success of our city.

Residents and Property Owners: To document values and vision for the future of Westminster, in a way that allows them to participate as informed and active citizens in the overall physical development of the city, including decisions about land use that impact them most directly.

Businesses and Developers: To provide guidance on how to best achieve the community's vision in ways that allow them to grow, adapt, and implement their development and business plans.

City Staff: To work with applicants and stakeholders to review development proposals and to provide decision-makers with information about how the proposals align with the intention, vision, and policies of the Plan.

- To create and implement city initiatives including Code changes and process improvements that advance the goals and recommendations of this Plan.
- To work collaboratively with stakeholders on the more detailed plans and projects necessary to implement and achieve the goals of this Plan.

City Leaders: To position Westminster for the future by establishing annual work plan priorities, developing partnerships, ensuring accountability of city departments, and making thoughtful and informed decisions in harmony with the goals of this Plan.

City Partners: To provide information to governmental, non-profit, and private sector partners on the city's future development and infrastructure, including surrounding communities, transportation providers, regional planning groups and other key regional players.



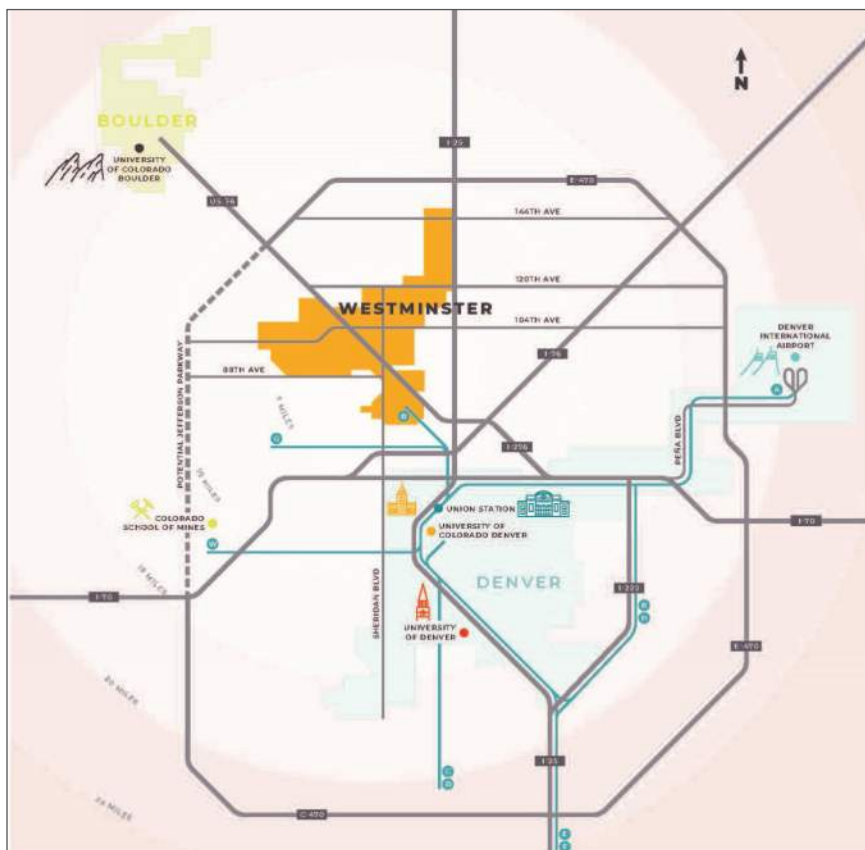
1.6 REGIONAL LOCATION & CONTEXT

RELATIONSHIP TO THE REGION

The City of Westminster sits between the cities of Boulder and Denver, in the northwest quadrant of the Denver Metropolitan (Denver Metro) area. The city is bordered by the City and County of Broomfield, the cities of Arvada, Thornton, Northglenn, and Federal Heights, and unincorporated Adams and Jefferson counties. The western portion of the city directly abuts the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge in Jefferson County. With these fixed boundaries there are few opportunities for future annexation into the City of Westminster.

Two major transportation corridors traverse the city—US Highway 36 (US 36), connecting the city northwest to Boulder and the mountains, and Interstate 25 (I-25), running between Denver and Fort Collins. The city also benefits from direct access to the Denver International Airport by Regional Transportation District (RTD) bus and commuter rail service and is served by the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport, a public-use operator with a number of operations, though this facility currently does not have commercial airline service. Though controversial, the city must recognize plans by external agencies to establish Jefferson Parkway—a privately-funded, publicly-owned regional toll road that would link existing regional highways to form a circumferential route around the Metro Area and potential benefits and/or impacts that may affect the westernmost parts of the city.

The city's land area is expansive, encompassing 34 square miles, located within two counties, Adams and Jefferson, as well as three separate school districts: Westminster Public Schools, Adams 12 Five Star Schools and Jeffco Public Schools. The planning boundary of this Comprehensive Plan coincides with the outer extent of the existing city limits, with the exception of a few areas at the southwest and southeast portions of the city that are enclaves of unincorporated Jefferson and Adams counties, respectively.



Regional Map showing location between Boulder and Denver, the regional transportation system and destinations.



Westminster City Park

PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Westminster's growth and land use patterns have been influenced by the natural features of the Front Range, constrained by abutting political boundaries, and organized by transportation infrastructure. The city takes on an irregular shape due to being surrounded by municipalities and a natural area, limiting the ability to grow outward as the population increases. However, other factors such as water and sewer availability, transportation facilities, and the network of parks, and open spaces also play important roles in the location and amount of new development.

The city's gently rolling hills are interspersed with creek corridors and waterbodies including Little Dry Creek, Walnut Creek, and Big Dry Creek and their tributaries, as well as Standley Lake, McKay Lake, Ketner Lake, Loon Lake, Mower Reservoir, Bull Reservoir, and Hidden Lake. The city relies on its waterbodies and creek corridors for drainage and in some cases water supply. Floodplains and wetland areas provide important wildlife habitat, but also constrain locations for new development. The majority of this sensitive habitat area is part of the city's open space network, which comprises 3,100 acres of land within the city. Additional sensitive habitat area is located within the city's 2,910 acres of park land and 644 acres of public golf courses.

Much of Westminster is atop a ridge that results in significant slopes in some areas that exceed 15 percent. These areas include land north of 120th Avenue near Federal Parkway and south of 84th Avenue near Lowell and Federal boulevards. While development in these locations is limited by steep slopes, it is enhanced by the views of the mountains and Downtown Denver.

Manmade features such as transportation corridors also shape the city's development. Westminster's roadway system is based on a grid of major roadways that generally extend throughout the Denver Metro area. Two major regional transportation corridors are US 36 that cuts diagonally through the city, and Interstate 25, which defines the city's northeastern boundary.

The City of Westminster supports transit to Denver and the eventual completion of the FasTracks Northwest Corridor commuter rail line toward Boulder as funding/financing becomes available. Westminster Station was funded as part of RTD's Eagle P3 project and opened on July 25, 2016. It functions as an end-of-line station until funding becomes available for the remainder of the Northwest Corridor. The City of Westminster has continued to pursue efforts to extend the commuter rail line through Downtown Westminster and Church Ranch.

Development is also influenced by manmade activity that requires additional considerations, such as the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport and oil and gas extraction. Noise-related impacts and critical zones beyond Airport boundaries impact the types of land uses and development patterns that are appropriate in these areas. In the past Westminster also has had oil and gas extraction locations and this will need to be considered in



development decisions should such extraction activities resume. While previous well sites are primarily concentrated in the North I-25 area, there has been interest by the industry in pursuing well sites in the vicinity of Standley Lake, Westminster Hills Open Space, and Rocky Flats.

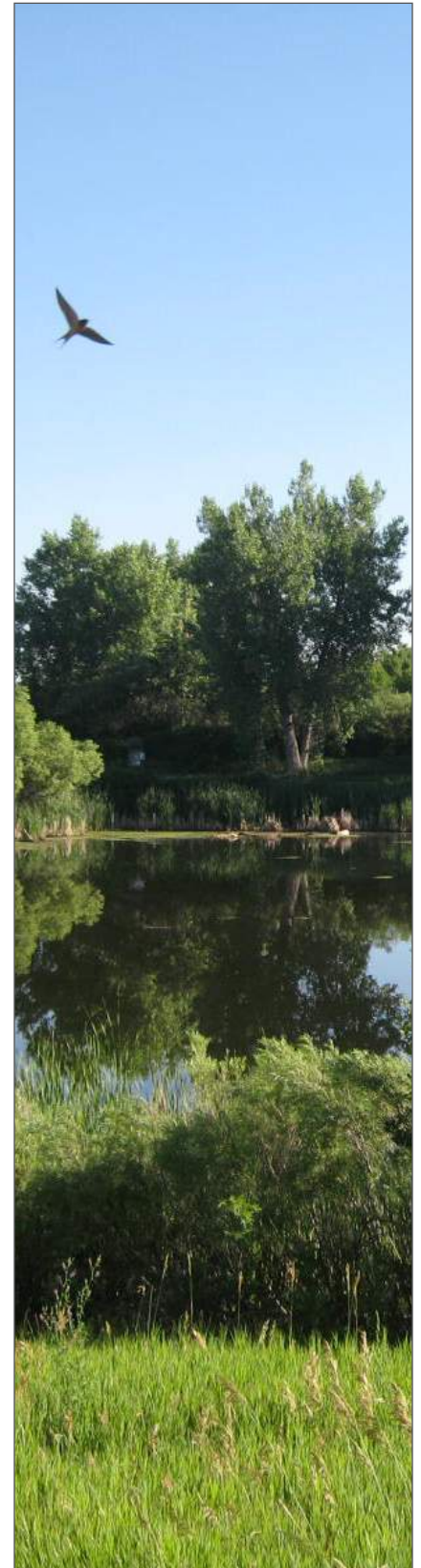
As part of a metropolitan area, Westminster also faces several regional environmental issues caused by past and present human activity. Some require regular monitoring and remediation, such as contamination from Rocky Flats, a former nuclear weapons-related facility, and potential zebra and quagga mussel infestation from activities at Standley Lake. Other issues require ongoing diligence, such as protecting water and soil quality from potential oil and gas operations and improving air quality by reducing tail pipe emissions. This Plan recognizes the importance of both local actions and regional collaboration to address issues like these.

WATER SUPPLY INFLUENCES GROWTH

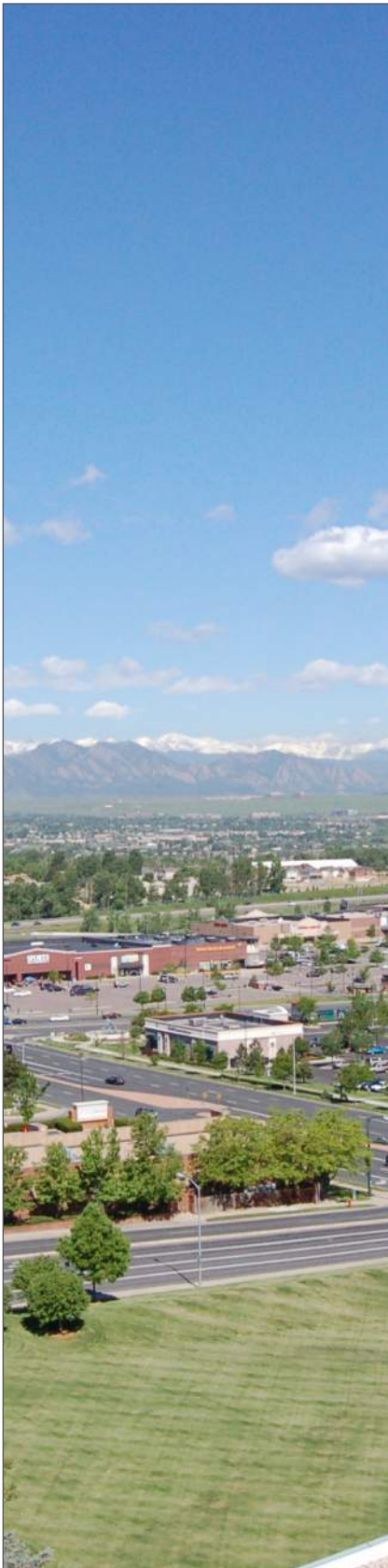
Westminster's water supply is finite. Remaining opportunities to increase water supply yield of the system is primarily centered on increasing operational efficiency and expanding reservoir storage. To be truly sustainable, the city must live within available resources, which may be further constrained by drought and the extent of conservation activities. To meet this Vision a variety of factors, including water supply and infrastructure, is weighed and thoughtfully balanced in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Westminster's potable water supply comes primarily from the Clear Creek watershed and the city is located within the South Platte River Basin. Standley Lake is the water storage reservoir used for the city, as well as providing safe drinking water for 300,000 residents of Adams and Jefferson Counties including Northglenn, Thornton, Federal Heights as well as customers of the Farmers Reservoir and Irrigation Company (FRICO). Water originating from the South Platte River Basin makes up approximately 90% of the city's water supply. Water in this basin has been over-appropriated—meaning there is not sufficient water available in the basin to fill the needs of all water rights holders. Ten percent of Westminster's water supply comes from Denver Water, much of which is “trans-basin” water, meaning it originates from the Western Slope. Water availability on the Western Slope is also limited and moving water from the Western Slope is politically and legally difficult.

The majority of Westminster's water supply comes from several irrigation ditches constructed in the mid-19th century, including the Farmers' High Line Canal (FHL), Croke Canal, Church Ditch, the Kershaw Ditch, and the Manhart Ditch. These ditches along with two reservoirs (Standley Lake and Jim Baker Reservoir) serve as the city's primary water supply. A third reservoir complex near Brighton, named Wattenberg Reservoir, is under construction now and will yield resiliency for water supply for the city by providing a reservoir of water to ensure downstream flows.



Margaret's Pond



GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Incorporated in 1911, Westminster began as a small community centered on a commercial district near West 73rd Avenue and Bradburn Boulevard. The city remained relatively small until the post-World War II era. Since 1950, the population has grown from 1,686 to approximately 113,166 persons as of 2019, moving the city to be the eighth most populated city in Colorado. During that same period, the city's land area increased from 4.5 square miles to 34 square miles, resulting from the annexation of large tracts of vacant lands to the north and west. This expansion was facilitated in part by the purchase of water resource rights that provided the city with greater capacity for development.

The most significant periods of population growth in the city's history are between 1970 and 2000, during which time the city population increased from 19,512 to 100,940, roughly 2,000 to 3,000 persons per year with the greatest amount of growth between 1970 and 1980 with a 157% increase. Much of this growth was expressed in large master planned communities such as the Ranch and Countryside. As the city's land inventory has shrunk the amount of growth has greatly slowed. In the current decade Westminster added less than 1,000 persons per year, or roughly 0.8% growth per year.

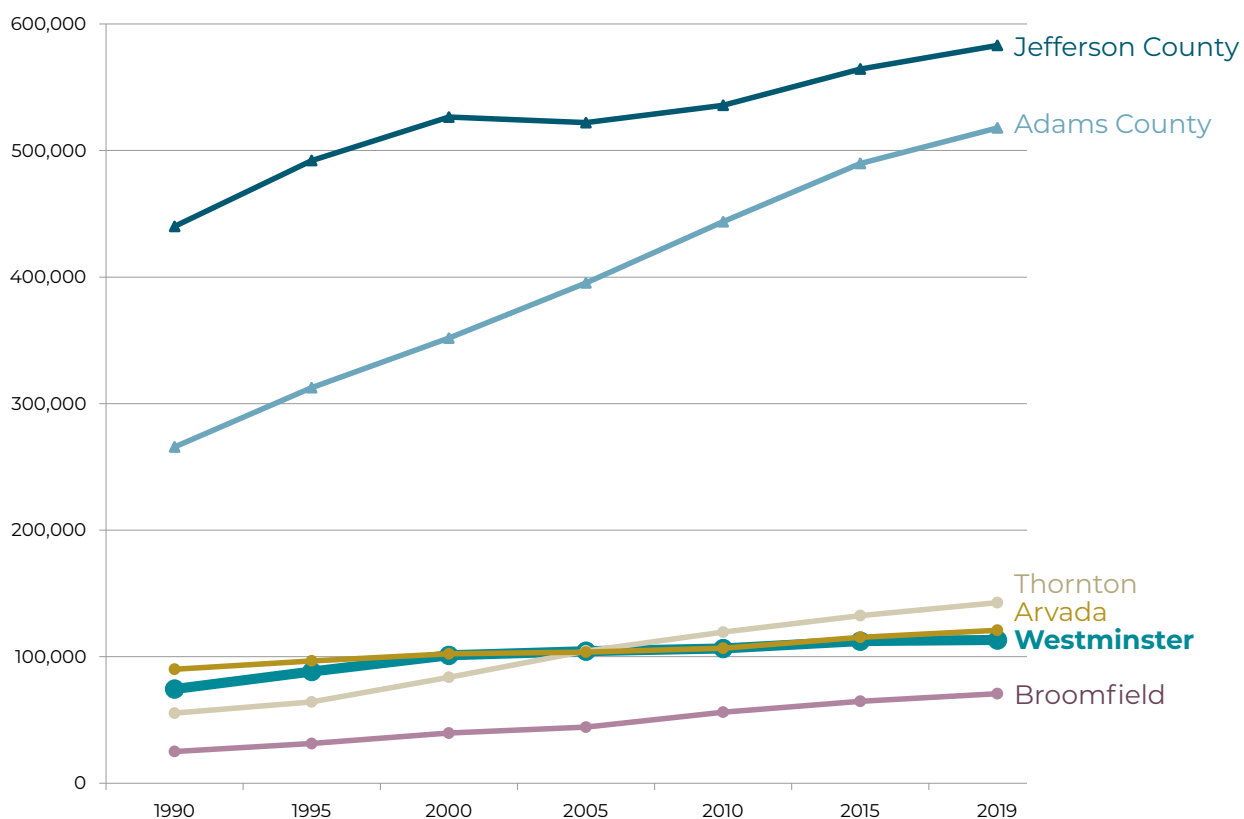
Between 2020 and 2050, Colorado's statewide population is projected to increase by 2.3 million people, with the Denver Metro Area absorbing about 38% according to Colorado Department of Local Affairs. DRCOG forecasts around 151,200 people will call Westminster home by 2040. However, Westminster is a mature city with limited undeveloped and vacant areas to grow into. Also, recent trends indicate shrinking household sizes and new housing construction consisting of smaller dwelling units. Understanding that Westminster is largely already built out, coupled with utility and site constraints and recent housing trends indicate that conventional population estimates are becoming less reliable, therefore these population growth and housing assumptions will need to be regularly evaluated and adjusted downward as appropriate.

The 2020 Community Survey Report indicates goals and services that the city should continue to focus on. Of the 15 choices given to respondents, a majority identified each as "essential" or "very important", but the greatest importance was identified with drinking water quality, public safety services, and park maintenance and preservation of natural area as continuing priorities to maintain the quality of life valued by residents today.

Unlike many other Front Range communities, Westminster is a full-service community. The city provides police, fire, library, and utility services to residents and businesses within the city. The Comprehensive Plan will support excellence in city services, while also being cognizant of financial sustainability and the need to plan for future needs.



Chart 1-1. Comparison of Population Growth to Surrounding Municipalities



Source: Colorado State Demography Office

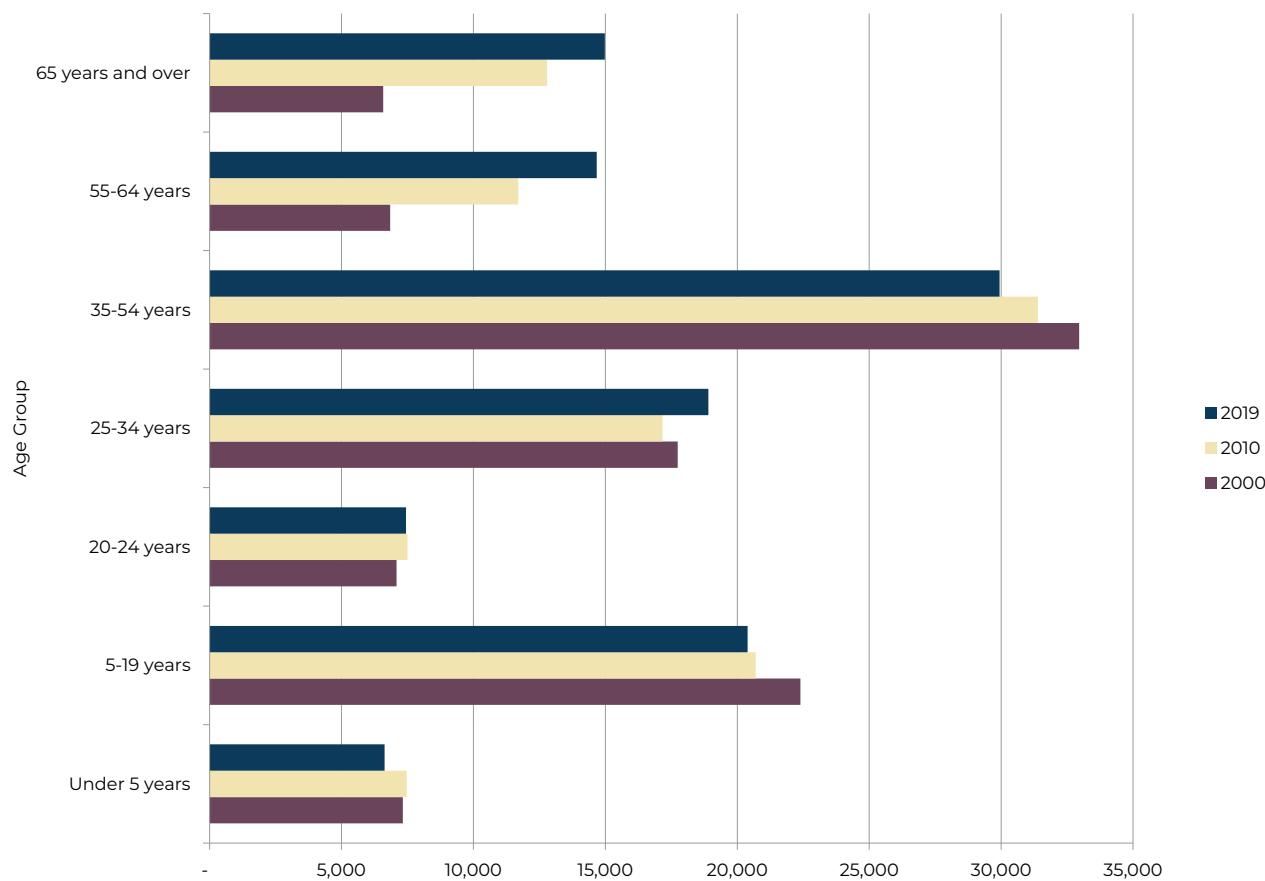
IMPACTS AND EFFECTS OF AN AGING POPULATION

Data from the 2020 Housing Needs Assessment and U.S. Census show the city's senior population increasing. Currently, residents age 35-54 represent the largest share of Westminister's population at 27%, followed by 5-19 year old (18%) and 25-34 year olds (17%). The fastest growing age segment is 55-64 years old, increasing by over 7,800 people since 2000 and including residents who will soon be retiring from the workforce. The number of residents between 55 and 64 years old and those older than 65 more than doubled since 2000 and now represent a quarter of the total population.

With many of our seniors expected to "age in place," this significant increase in older residents will create a range of impacts and market demands for the built environment and allocation of municipal services. Accommodating an aging population has implications across the board; from healthcare and related businesses, accessibility, transportation, and public safety to a demand for a wider diversity of housing, retail trade, and municipal services. This is seen at the State, county and local levels across the Front Range.



Chart 1-2. Population by Age Group



Source: US Census 2000 and 2010, ACS 2019 5 yr estimate



The city is already seeing a large portion of residents choosing to age in place. To facilitate aging in place, considerations to land use, transportation, and access to services and amenities will need to be made in order to improve the livability of communities for senior residents. The locations of homes in suburban areas characterized by low-density development patterns and limited transportation alternatives also impacts quality of life for seniors. Walking is important for the mobility and recreation for older persons, and existing transit service could be improved to support this age cohort. Development of activity centers with a mix of housing, amenities and access to transportation are strategies to provide housing choices and improve access to basic services using alternative transportation options, as driving a personal vehicle safely often becomes less feasible for older adults.

The declining population of children and youths since 2000 relates to the historic and anticipated decline in school enrollment. See Chapter 5 for more details.



CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

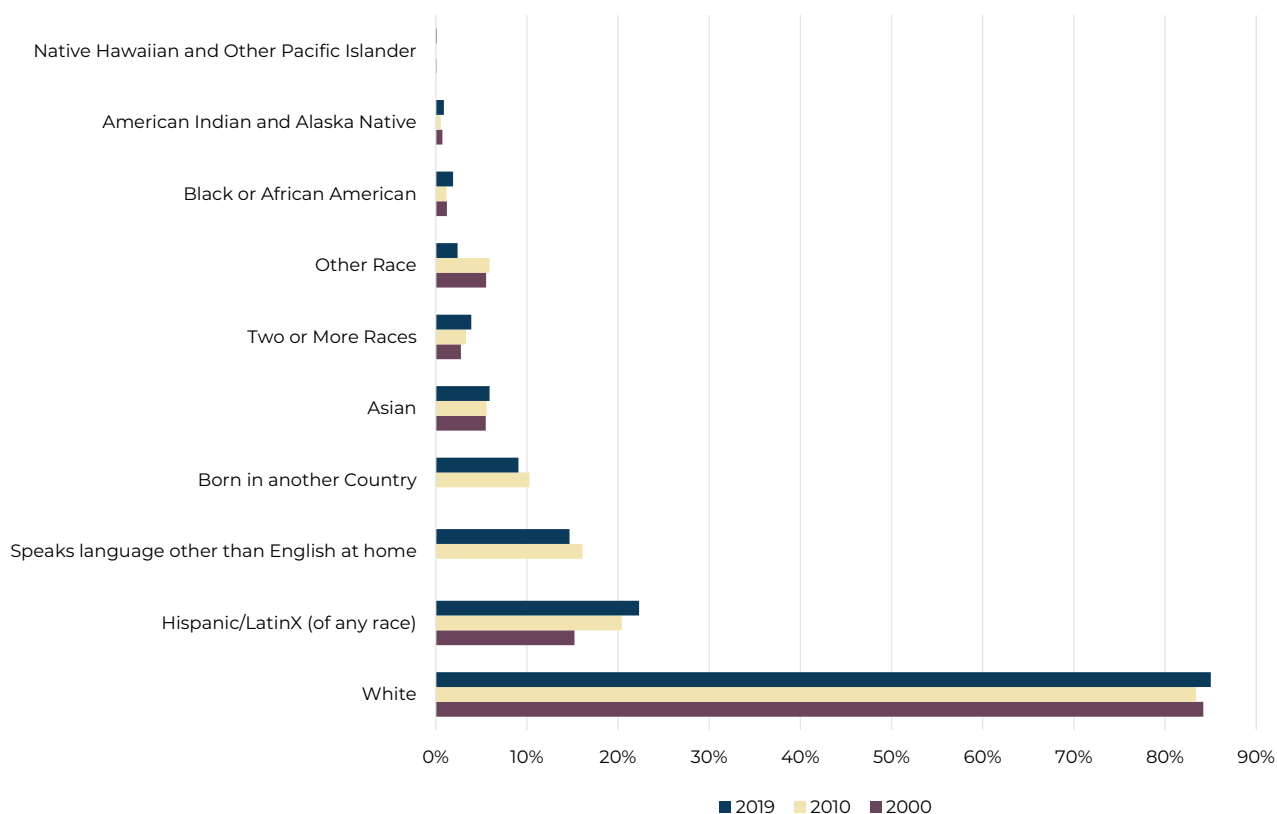
As Westminster's population grows, the city is gaining greater diversity in its residents from a cultural perspective. As of 2019, about 9% of Westminster residents were born in another country, of which 41% are Latin American and 40.5% are Asian, and 16% of residents speak a language other than English at home. Spanish, Hmong, and Vietnamese are the three most common languages spoken in Westminster, after English. Census data shows that residents born in other countries generally make less money and a higher ratio of such homeowners are cost-burdened than native-born.

The Hispanic/Latinx population grew by 64% from the year 2000 to 2019, with 22% of all Westminster residents identifying as Hispanic/Latinx of any race in 2019. Westminster's Hispanic/Latinx families and foreign-born families are generally larger than average, with household sizes averaging 3.32 persons compared to the lower average of 2.55 persons for all households in Westminster. This may increase demand for larger housing units, intergenerational housing, or accessory dwelling units (ADUs).



Westminster Latino Fest

Chart 1-3. Race and Ethnicity in Westminster



Source US Census 2000 and 2010, ACS 2010 and 2019 5 yr estimates

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2.0

COMMUNITY PLACES

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan identifies key locations where more detailed information and guidance is necessary beyond the citywide goals and policies identified through the other chapters of the Plan. Planning for vibrant centers of activity and new land uses, as well as identifying locations for parks, open spaces and other amenities supports the *Great Neighborhoods* guiding principle. This is done by maintaining existing neighborhoods, preserving open spaces, and focusing investments in locations where infrastructure currently supports or is planned to support anticipated development, such as adjacent to transit stations or in redevelopment areas. This chapter establishes a framework for three different community place types – Focus Areas, Transition Areas and Urban Renewal Areas.



Historic Westminster
Photo: Carol McGowan

2.1 OVERVIEW

While the 2040 Comprehensive Plan describes the city's overall intent and vision for the Community Places, more geographic-specific policy and urban design concepts for each area are needed to ensure compatibility with surrounding areas, responds to future change and promotes the community's values.

FOCUS AREAS

Five Focus Areas are identified as areas that have the greatest potential for growth and change in Westminster over the next 20 years and are near major crossroads and transit stations where a more compact mixed-use setting can be fostered to support placemaking and economic vitality. Since the identification of the Focus Areas in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, two Specific Area Plans have been adopted. Once a Specific Area Plan is adopted by City Council, it will be incorporated by reference in the Comprehensive Plan and will serve as the primary land use regulation for the area. Until a Specific Area Plan is adopted, the vision and intent described in this chapter will serve as a guide for new development. Goals and policies are established in these separate supporting documents or in other chapters of this Plan.

TRANSITION AREAS

Since the majority of the city is anticipated to remain stable with incremental development generally in context with the surrounding area, this update to the Comprehensive Plan further identified five Transition Areas where some degree of growth and change is expected from existing conditions, but not at the scale nor intensity of the Focus Areas. The Transition Areas were developed to refine land uses and identify potential building types and urban design considerations for the Unified Development Code, while also identifying multimodal transportation connections, potential park and recreation sites, and character defining elements such as viewsheds. These areas are considered important sub-areas that require unique considerations relative to use, site planning, amenities, and preservation of views.

FRAMEWORK GRAPHICS

This chapter provides a framework graphic for each Focus or Transition Area to elaborate upon the goals and policies of other chapters of this Plans. Each framework identifies gateways into the area, key view opportunities, and catalytic sites where future redevelopment may occur due to either vacancies, large amounts of surface parking or land uses that are not anticipated to remain over the 20-year Plan horizon. Major destinations are identified to show uses or buildings that attract visitors from outside of the Focus or Transition Area. The frameworks also identify features in the public realm such as park amenities, transit facilities and mobility considerations such as street connections and bicycle and pedestrian routes to support circulation within the area and to adjacent neighborhoods. These include existing connections



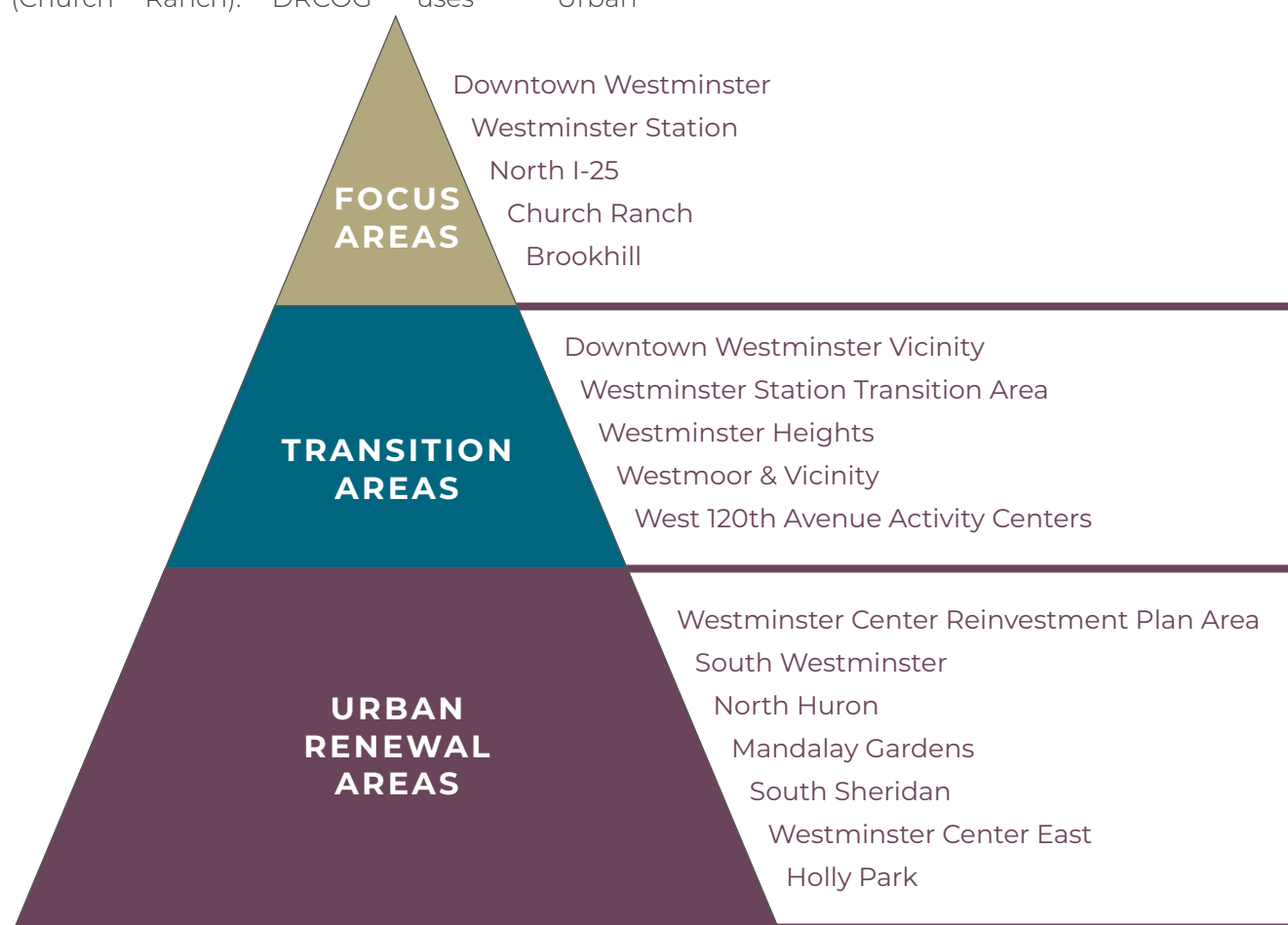
anticipated within existing plans and potential connections to designate additional connections to facilitate the vision of each Focus or Transition Area. A 500-foot buffer is also provided around each framework graphic so as to include consideration for surrounding neighborhoods and the need to ensure appropriate transitions.

PLACE TYPES

A number of these Focus Areas and Transition Areas overlap with the Urban Centers identified by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) in the Metro Vision 2040 Plan. An Urban Center is defined by DRCOG as a multimodal, dense, and mixed-use development node that could be developed or intensified to provide a balance of jobs and housing units. The DRCOG plan establishes five Urban Centers in Westminster: North I-25, South Westminster (Westminster Station), West 120th Avenue (West 120th Avenue Activity Center), Downtown Westminster, and Westminster Promenade (Church Ranch). DRCOG uses Urban

Centers as the basis for decision making about regional growth, in particular the formation of a regional transportation system.

Lastly, the city currently has seven Urban Renewal Areas, some of which overlay the Focus and Transition Areas. The primary purpose of urban renewal is to promote economic vitality to an area by attracting private and public investments, which it does by removing blighted conditions that act as a barrier to development. Urban renewal districts are governed by adopted plans specific to the blight criteria documented in their formation. This section provides a description of the city's overall vision and land use intent for each Focus and Transition Area, as well as the role of urban renewal districts in achieving the visions for these areas. This section will augment the more generalized direction of the citywide land uses identified in Chapter 3 with site-specific considerations at such time development occurs in Focus and Transition Areas.





2.2 MIXED-USE PLACES

All five of the Focus Areas and several of the Transition Areas are anticipated to incorporate mixed-use elements through infill and redevelopment, with some opportunities for new development on vacant land. The mixed-use elements will vary but may incorporate various types of housing, employment, opportunities for retail and services, civic functions, and other uses that support for the vision for each area.

DOWNTOWN WESTMINSTER FOCUS AREA

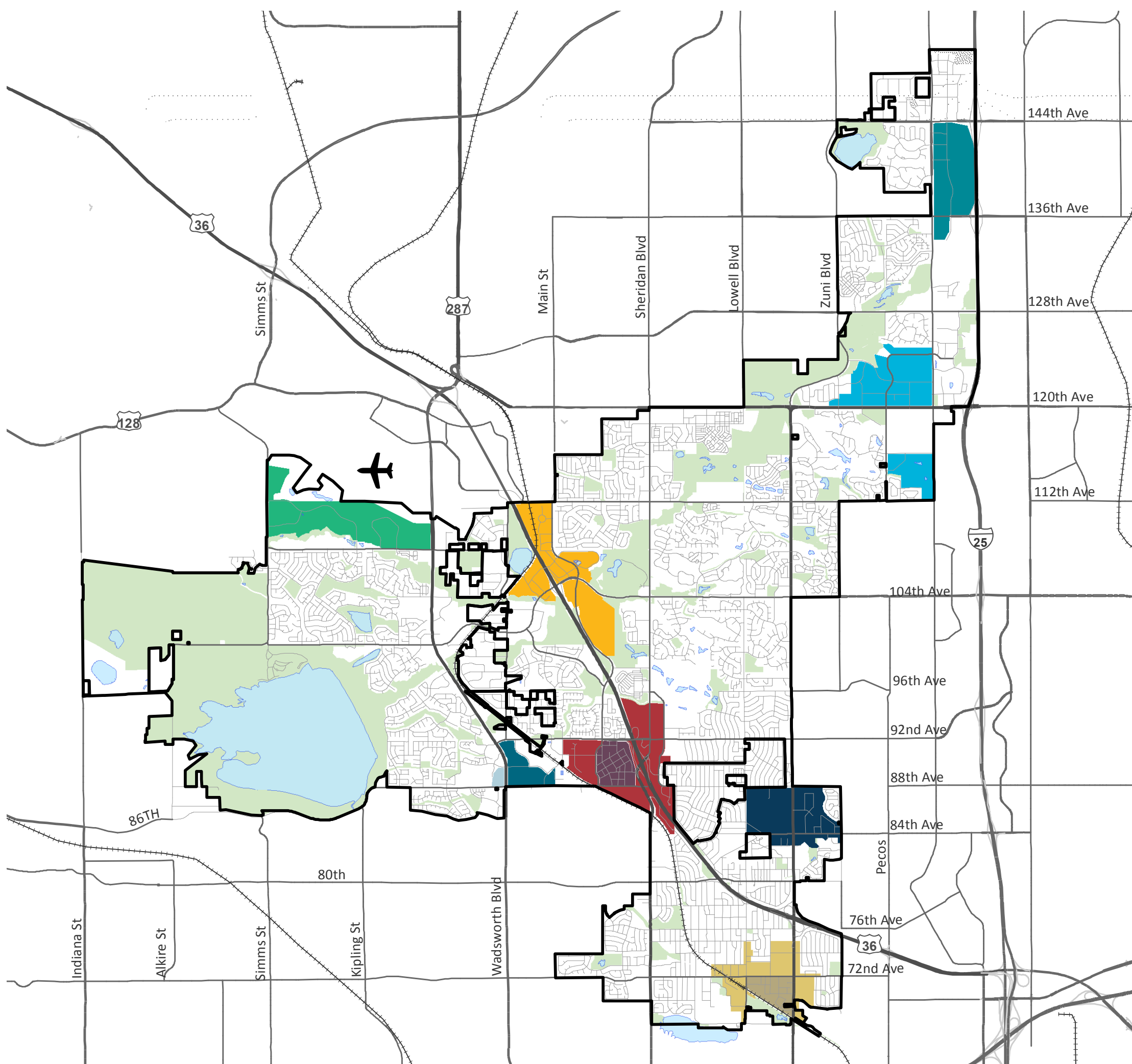
Downtown Westminister is a 105-acre area in the heart of Westminister that constitutes the site of the former Westminister Mall. The location is regionally well-connected and lies approximately half way between Denver and Boulder. The [Downtown Specific Plan](#) guides development in this Focus Area bounded by Sheridan Boulevard/US 36 and Harlan Street to the east and west, and West 92nd and 88th Avenues to the north and south.

Westminister Mall was once a significant regional destination, as well as an important gathering place for the Westminister community. In keeping with its role as a community destination, Downtown Westminister is envisioned as a regional hub. A higher-intensity mix of office, retail, residential, and hotel uses serve as the foundation for activity and are complemented by an interconnected network of plazas, parks, and linear greens. A safe, walkable pedestrian environment is emphasized along with clear navigation for bicyclists, vehicles, and transit throughout the downtown area. A new street grid that enhances connectivity has been constructed with maximized views to the mountains and Downtown Denver. Access and connectivity to existing and future transit will ensure that employment and residential uses are connected to the larger metropolitan area.

Downtown Westminister Vicinity Transition Area

In the immediate vicinity of the Downtown Westminister redevelopment area, development is primarily retail, with some office and industrial flex space to the west. A future RTD FasTracks commuter rail station is planned to the south, across West 88th Avenue and just east of the Westminister Boulevard alignment. The Downtown Westminister Focus Area and portions of the Vicinity Transition Area to the west of US 36 are located within a 10-minute walk of the planned station. The pace of build out of Downtown Westminister and the timing of the RTD commuter rail extension to West 88th Avenue will be determining factors for land use changes in these areas. Premature land use changes could undermine the integrity of the immense public investments in Downtown Westminister, while thoughtful extensions of Downtown Westminister to the south and west would complement Downtown buildout and support the planned commuter rail with transit-oriented development. Stable





Map 2-1. Focus Areas and Transition Areas

Legend

Focus Areas

- Brookhill
- Church Ranch
- Downtown Westminster
- North I-25
- Westminster Station

Transition Areas

- Brookhill Vicinity
- Downtown Westminster Vicinity
- Westminster Station Area Vicinity
- West 120th Avenue Activity Centers
- Westminster Heights
- Westmoor & Vicinity
- Highway
- Major roads
- Local roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Parks and Open Space
- Westminster



0 0.5 1 2 Miles



residential development borders the area to the north and is not included within either the Focus or Transition Areas.

The Transition Area east of US 36, particularly north of West 92nd Avenue, should be significantly reduced in scale to match the suburban context with some key infill occurring within existing retail centers. There are opportunities to redevelop and re-envision this commercial area with more experiential retail, mixed-use, and potentially even residential uses at appropriate scales. Where retail centers are redeveloped, a gridded circulation pattern should be incorporated to form a block structure that supports connectivity and provides for additional infill opportunities. This may take the form of continuing existing circulation patterns and/or bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

City Hall is less than half a mile to the east of Downtown Westminster on West 92nd Avenue, as is the Westminster Center Park. This convenient access and proximity within the center of the city reinforces the potential of Downtown as the heart of Westminster and primary destination for the surrounding region. Additionally, the RTD Sheridan Park-n-Ride—one of the busiest stations within the entire Denver Metro area—is situated immediately to the east of Downtown Westminster at Sheridan Boulevard and West 88th Avenue. This supports continued office development in the Sheridan Park area, as well as supporting hospitality uses. Some of the taller structures in this area enjoy views to both the Front Range and Downtown Denver. Lower density residential neighborhoods east of this area form a hard boundary that should be respected with future development.

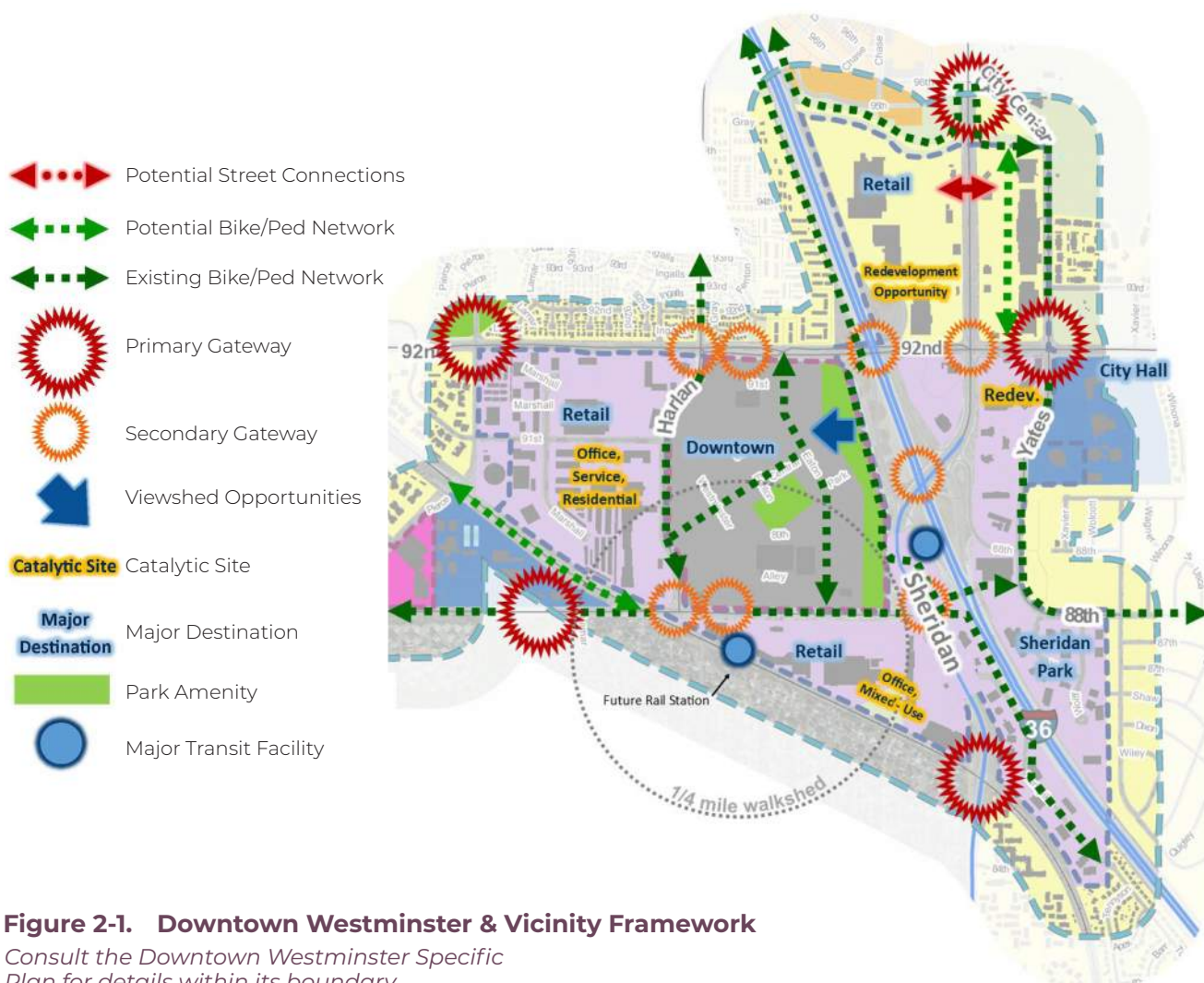


Figure 2-1. Downtown Westminster & Vicinity Framework

Consult the Downtown Westminster Specific Plan for details within its boundary.



WESTMINSTER STATION FOCUS AREA

Located just southeast of the city's historic core, the Westminster Station Area is designed to become a mixed-use, transit-oriented urban neighborhood and regional destination. The station is advantageously located just a half-mile south of the US 36 and Federal Boulevard interchange. The 135-acre Focus Area is guided by the [Westminster Station Area Specific Plan](#) (2017), and anchored by Westminster Station, a RTD FasTracks commuter rail station, which supports the development of transit-supportive mixed-use development nearby that will include balanced housing options, a diverse mix of commercial uses, and a rich environment for arts and culture, as well as a 38-acre regional park.

Westminster Station is envisioned as a vibrant district that will act as a node of energy and activity around the station. The area is designed to comprise a mix of higher-intensity retail, office, and residential development with an emphasis on active ground floor uses along key connections to the station. A walkable, pedestrian-oriented public realm and appropriately-sized street grid is envisioned to complement this level of development activity. Street connections, improved accessibility and circulation by multiple modes, as well as an attractive, varied public realm are all emphasized. Uses and activities that support the artistic and cultural identity of this area are encouraged along with an environment for creative industries.

Westminster Station Transition Area

Westminster's historic neighborhoods surround the Westminster Station Area, including the southern areas of the Harris Park neighborhood. The proximity to US 36 and multimodal connectivity with the B Line/Westminster Station and the Little Dry Creek Trail makes this area attractive for redevelopment. There are substantial amounts of retail along Federal Boulevard, including the Westminster Square and Westminster Plaza shopping centers, which have land capacity for some degree of redevelopment. There are also a number of unique local businesses in the area that cater to Westminster's growing Asian and Latinx populations. The demographics of this area skew toward a higher percentage of residents age 65 and older, specifically for the census tract located between West 72nd and 76th Avenues.

Recent commercial infill along the east side of Federal Boulevard between West 72nd and 74th Avenues exhibits the anticipated building form with greater attention toward the streetscape and pedestrian environment to support the evolution of Federal Boulevard from a state highway into a multimodal corridor that better supports revitalization of the area and improves safety. A separate Federal Boulevard Multimodal Transportation Study is underway to identify the future approach to transportation and the built environment.



Westminster Station
 Photo (middle): Ron Booth
 Photo (bottom): City of Westminster



The largest vacant parcel in this area is the Northgate property east of Federal Boulevard between West 70th and 72nd Avenues. This property is expected to provide a transition from the higher intensity Westminster Station Area to the lower density residential area to the east. Some precedent for this approach has been set with the small lot residential development adjacent to the south and located in unincorporated Adams County.

The 37.5-acre Westminster Station Park was established as a companion to the Westminster Station development and includes significant flood control measures to benefit surrounding properties. A continuous park and trail system is planned to extend along Little Dry Creek as identified in the England Park Corridor Plan. The Little Dry Creek Trail will eventually be incorporated with the planned Rocky Mountain Greenway Trail, connecting the Rocky Mountain Arsenal and Rocky Flats National Wildlife refuges.

To the north of the Westminster Station Area is the Harris Park neighborhood. To ensure a compatible transition, the Harris Park Community Vision Plan (HPCVP) supports a unique mix of historic buildings, restaurants, shops and small businesses. The HPCVP identifies a desire for a variety of transportation methods and an artistic, lively, eclectic, and activated mix of activities and programming to celebrate the culture and heritage of the neighborhood. Infill development is anticipated, but at a scale

HISTORIC WESTMINSTER EST. 1870



*Historic Westminster
Photo: Carol McGowan*

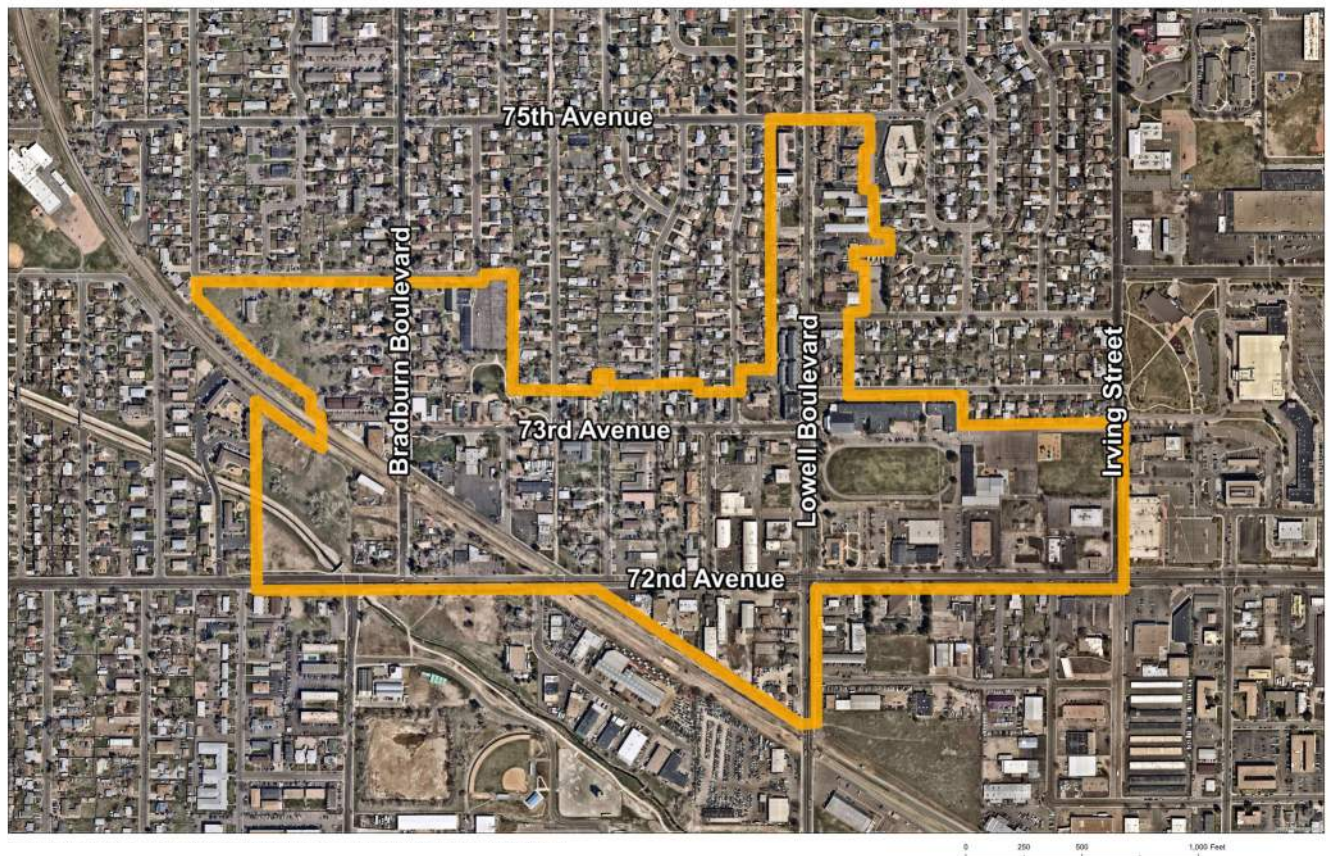


Figure 2-2. Harris Park Community Vision Plan



Irving Street Library

and intensity that is much less than the Westminster Station Area. “Gentle infill” characterizes development adjacent to West 72nd Avenue from Irving Street to Lowell Boulevard and along Lowell Boulevard south of West 73rd Avenue.

South of the BNSF railroad tracks, the Lowell Boulevard corridor contains a mix of industrial, commercial, and residential uses. Some capacity for light industrial uses should be maintained to provide opportunities for these uses to relocate within the immediate area if desired. Future/anticipated uses may include offices, microbreweries, laboratories, fabrication facilities, repair shops, and light manufacturing. Additionally, some senior and public housing exists in the vicinity of West 68th Avenue and Lowell Boulevard and any redevelopment needs to be sensitive to displacement issues.

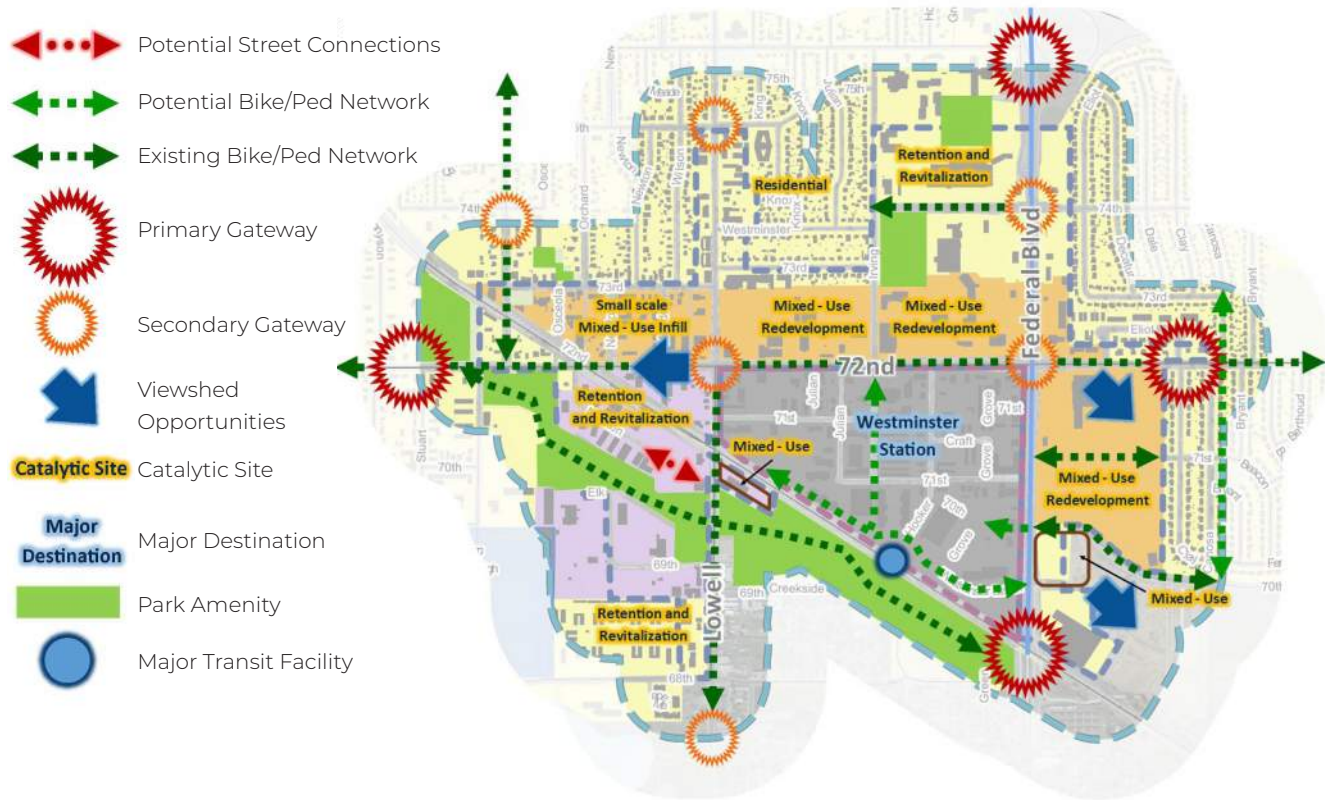


Figure 2-3. Westminster Station Transition Area Framework

Consult the Westminster Station Area Specific Plan for specific items within the boundary.



NORTH I-25 FOCUS AREA

The North I-25 Focus Area comprises approximately 282 acres of land between West 144th and West 134th Avenues, with I-25 and Huron Street bordering the east and west, respectively. This area is located within an area of rapid growth within Westminster, as well as in Broomfield to the north and Thornton to the east. Adjacent development includes the Orchard Town Center—a mixed-use development with multifamily residential and a restaurant, entertainment and retail-oriented center just to the north within Westminster. To the east of I-25 in Thornton, there is a mix of large-format retail commercial uses. The City of Westminster has a sales tax sharing agreement with the City of Thornton that covers a large portion of this area. Further to the north near State Highway 7 and I-25 in Broomfield, planned development includes substantial employment and residential uses.

The city has long envisioned the North I-25 Focus Area as a key employment hub and major gateway into the city. This area is anticipated as a district of office, research and development, and medical-related uses that maximizes employment opportunities in the area, brings daytime populations to further energize the Orchard Town Center, and complements the growing medical office uses already established with the St. Anthony North Health Campus. A degree of horizontal mixed-use development is expected with the opportunity to provide hotel and senior housing uses in proximity to St. Anthony North and potential medical office building uses. The city anticipates future hospital expansion and, therefore, will take measures to ensure adjacent properties are developed in a compatible manner; for example, limiting uses that may object to noise from ambulances and helicopters.

This Focus Area is the only remaining site in Westminster with I-25 visibility, which is beneficial for office and commercial development. Additionally, the convenient access from I-25—with two major interchanges at West 136th and 144th Avenues—provides opportunity for expanded retail commercial uses adjacent to these streets. Existing large-format retail development on both sides of West 136th Avenue at I-25 exemplify the market's attraction to highway visibility. With completion of the Denver Premium Outlets, the Grove, and Top Golf in Thornton, the area will establish a critical mass of activity in the corridor. Additional retail should focus on the demand for experiential uses such as complexes of dining, games and entertainment, as well as those that complement the office employment uses.

Should available resources or planned infrastructure support housing within this area, it should prioritize the opportunity for a continuum of care approach that provides supportive living environments for seniors in proximity to the St. Anthony North Health Campus. West of Orchard Parkway, residential uses should take the form of housing at scales to transition to the very low-density housing (<2.5 units per acre) west of North Huron. An additional transition measure is the significant landscape edge



St. Anthony North Health Campus

maintained along the east side of Huron Street, where development has occurred at Orchard Town Center and Orchard Park Place. This should continue through this Focus Area to provide continuity. Chapter 7, Housing and Neighborhoods, further explains goals and policies for senior housing and “missing middle” housing concepts. Housing development in this area should also provide Public Land Dedication on-site due to the lack of existing parks and recreation facilities in the area.

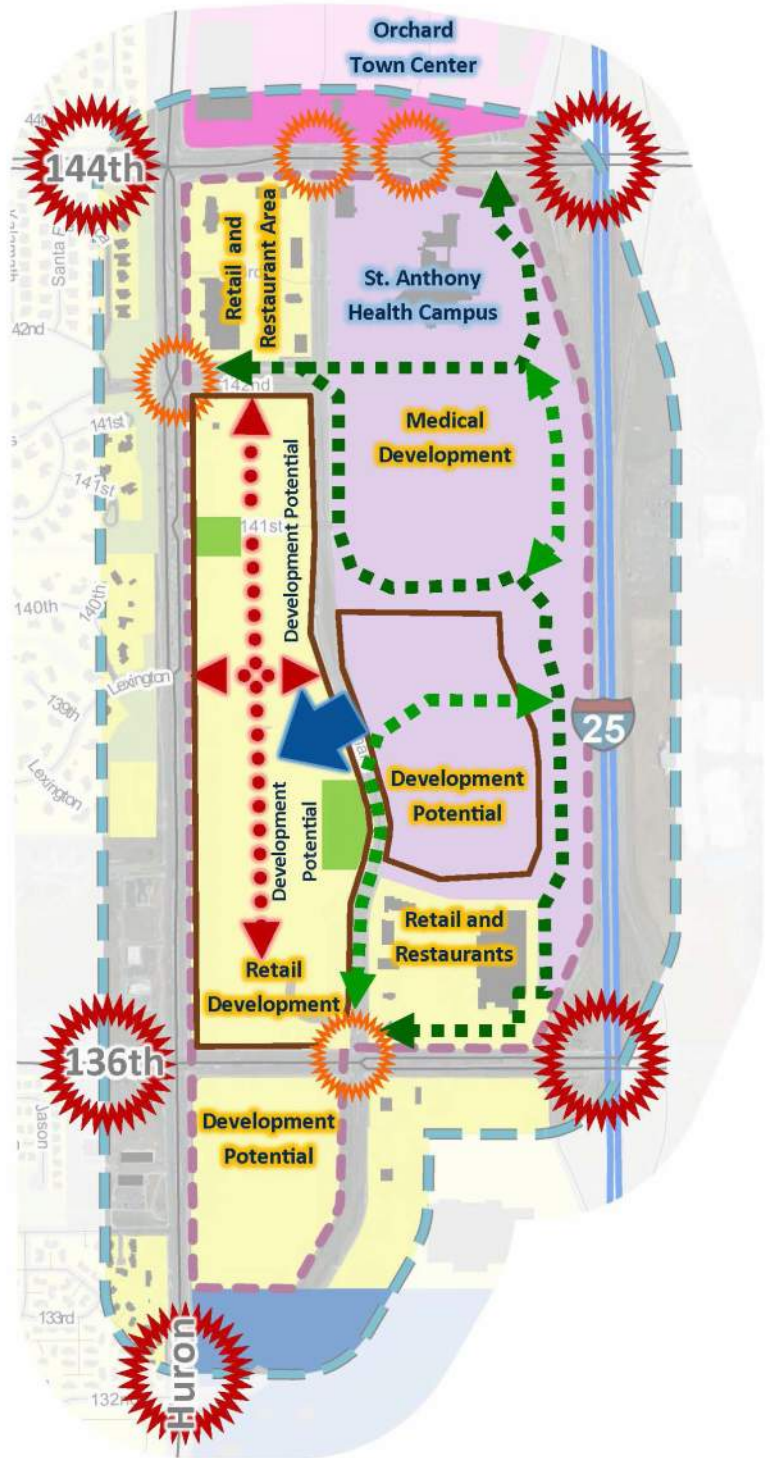


Figure 2-4. North I-25 Focus Area Framework



An interconnected street grid is planned, aligned with the north-south Orchard Parkway that will create an enhanced public realm to benefit new development. Buildings should be designed to create a strong presence along I-25 as well. There is limited public transportation to or within this area, but design standards can help establish a walkable and bikeable environment. In consideration of Thornton identifying the area across I-25 as a Regional Mixed-Use Center, the long-range transportation planning for the area should identify opportunities to provide transit access to the existing express bus services that travel from West 120th Avenue along I-25 to State Highway 7. An interim measure is microtransit service that links Orchard Town Center, St. Anthony North, Amazon DEN3, and the Premium Outlets to the Wagon Road Park-n-Ride at West 120th Avenue. If significant employment and housing development occur in this area, a third alternative is a direct linkage to the RTD N-Line Station at Eastlake/124th Avenue.

Planned infrastructure improvements will also provide opportunities for an enhanced environment for development in the focus area. The McKay Drainageway project addressed stormwater management for the area by removing several properties from the floodplain, thereby facilitating opportunities for development. This project also established a trail facility that connects this area to McKay Lake to the west, providing access to recreation. Realignment of the Bull Canal within the Foster Farm properties would also enhance development opportunities by addressing the irregular parcel configurations.

An additional infrastructure improvement is a new North Huron Interceptor Sewer to address limitations of wastewater service in this area. This improvement will enable continued build out of Orchard Town Center and other land uses compatible with the Comprehensive Plan. As with other city infrastructure, the capacity here is limited, and integrated planning is needed.



St. Anthony North Health Campus Community Garden

*Huron Street Bridge and
142nd Avenue Circle Bridge
over McKay Creek*



Westminster Promenade

CHURCH RANCH FOCUS AREA

The Church Ranch Focus Area has one of the most strategic locations in Westminster, as well as significant opportunities for new development and intensification. Straddling US 36 at Church Ranch Boulevard/West 104th Avenue, this area extends over 350 acres, including the Westminster Promenade and Circle Point developments, the vacant 103-acre Hawn property along Westminster Boulevard, and the Walnut Creek Town Center commercial area. The US 36 corridor is the preferred location for office space, regionally, north of I-70 in Metro Denver.

Just 12 miles north of Denver's central business district and 13 miles south of Boulder, the area is home to an RTD Park-n-Ride facility and adjacent to a future planned RTD FasTracks commuter rail station. The area is also located adjacent to significant community assets—in particular, the City Park Recreation and Fitness Center within City Park and the Big Dry Creek trail and open space. Additionally, the area is a major hospitality hub, with almost 1,000 hotel rooms in six hotels located on both sides of US 36. The Marriott and Westin hotels also provide some of the city's largest private event facilities. Hotels in this area tend to have higher rates on weekdays, and occupancy rates are generally consistent year-round, indicating that much of this is business-related travel likely associated with employment land uses along the US 36 corridor. A prime hotel site is located on city-owned land at the northeast corner of West 104th Avenue and Westminster Boulevard that could support the entertainment and recreational uses around the Promenade and City Park.

Circle Point is one of the premier office developments in Westminster. The campus is only partially completed, and there is significant land capacity for additional office development as well as opportunities to infill the underutilized parking fields. Recently, occupancies have increased at Circle Point with relocations of several major users from other Denver Metro areas. Further development within Circle Point should take access and circulation into account—including potential trail routes to the future RTD B rail line Church Ranch station—as well as companion development to the property located west of the BNSF railroad alignment.

The Church Ranch Focus Area will build on its established role as a regional and citywide destination, acting as a gateway into Westminster from US 36 and Broomfield. At the heart of this area is the 77-acre Westminster Promenade district, where major entertainment uses include a theater, restaurants, hotel, and ice center. This district is envisioned as a mixed-use activity center with the addition of residential and employment uses that will complement retail and entertainment. Access to the Flatiron Flyer bus and future access to a commuter rail station make this area particularly attractive for new development.

South of the Westminster Promenade and West 104th Avenue, is the Hawn property, which has extensive visibility from US 36 and



is well buffered from existing neighborhoods by virtue of park and open space lands west of the Waverly Acres neighborhood and north of West 98th Avenue. New office space with a mixture of housing types and a degree of local-serving retail is expected to provide dining and convenience-type uses for both office tenants and residents. The southernmost portion of this property is proposed to house a new water treatment plan. Nearly 60 acres will remain for future development, depending on the amount of land needed to accommodate the floodplain of Big Dry Creek. Few other properties in the city have access to the number of trails and recreation opportunities than the Hawn property offers.

The expanded office and residential uses will further activate the Church Ranch Focus Area with both day and night populations, supporting a wide range of shopping, dining and entertainment uses. This area can attract both employers and workers due to the access to transit and amenities, major hotels, and nearby variety of housing types.



Figure 2-5. Church Ranch Focus Area Framework



Towne Center at Brookhill

BROOKHILL FOCUS AREA

The Brookhill Focus Area encompasses just over 80 acres of retail development at Wadsworth Boulevard and West 88th Avenue. The area is bounded by West 92nd Avenue to the north, West 88th Avenue to the south, and multifamily residential development to the east. The 3.2-acre Westglenn Park acts as an anchor on the eastern side of the site, adjacent to the residential development. The Towne Center at Brookhill retail shopping center was built in the late 1980s and is still primarily comprised of mid- and large-box retail storefronts, several of which are anticipated to face challenges from changing retail trends and competing retail areas within Westminster, Broomfield, and Arvada.

Because of the site's visibility and location, it is envisioned as a future mixed-use neighborhood center with a range of commercial and residential uses. Building on proximity to Downtown Westminister less than a mile to the east and potential future RTD B-Line Station at West 88th Avenue, the area could transition as an extension of the Downtown Westminister area at a reduced scale in the future, depending on the pace of Downtown buildout and timing of the B-Line Station. Several unique dining

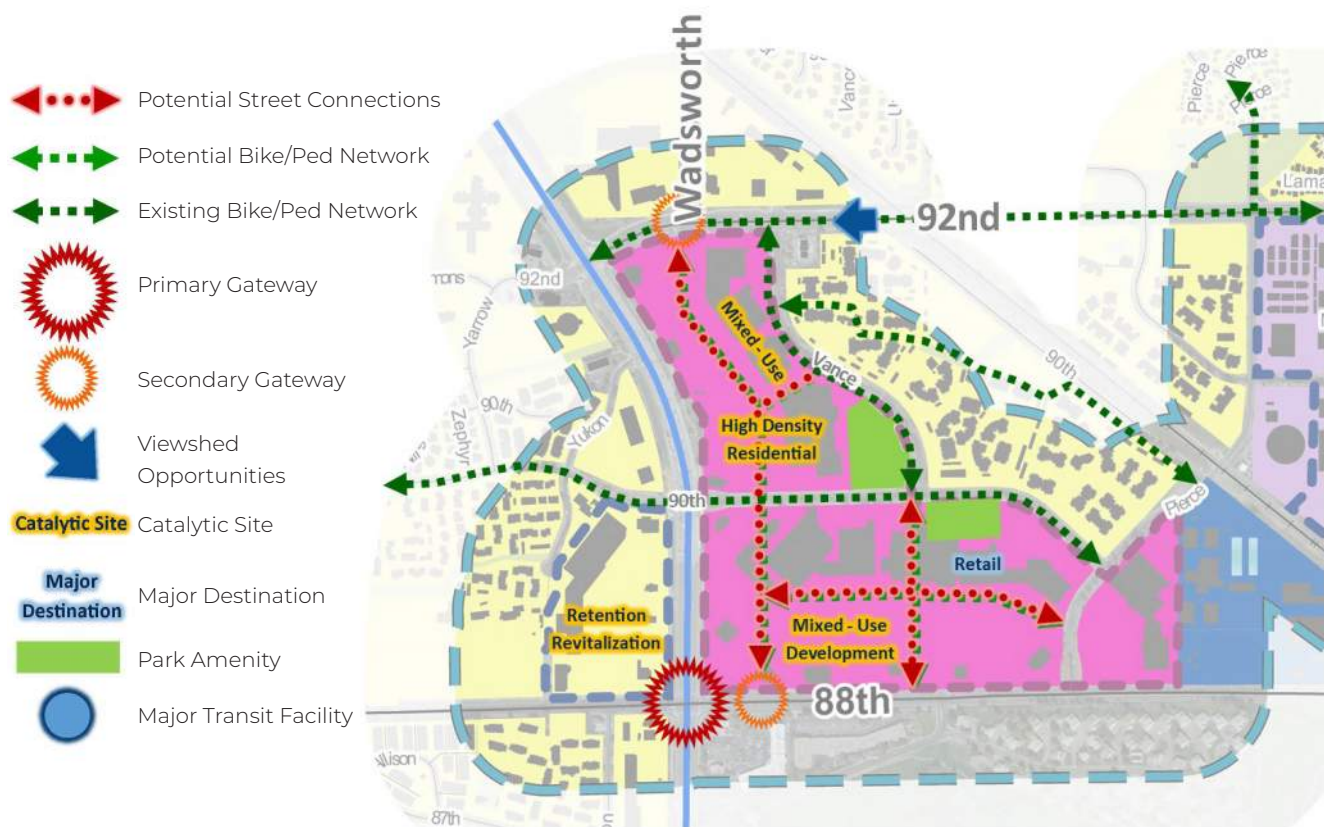


Figure 2-6. Brookhill Focus Area Framework



and entertainment establishments exist in this area, and infill and redevelopment should work around these assets and introduce structured parking as needed. Expansion of additional retail uses outside of existing retail properties along Wadsworth Boulevard and West 88th Avenue is strongly discouraged in order to focus retail and entertainment opportunities in Brookhill and established centers such as Mission Commons.

Improvements to the area should focus on a gridded street network with walkable block sizes and a pedestrian-oriented public realm centered on Westglenn Park and along West 90th Avenue. Additionally, connectivity to the neighboring residential development, as well as to Downtown Westminster and the Sheridan Park-n-Ride and future commuter rail station should be emphasized for all modes of travel. Extension of the Allen Ditch Trail along the BNSF rail corridor would help facilitate these connections.



Westglenn Park



Village Creek Apartments, Altitude Westminster Apartments, and Brookhill commercial area

WESTMINSTER HEIGHTS TRANSITION AREA

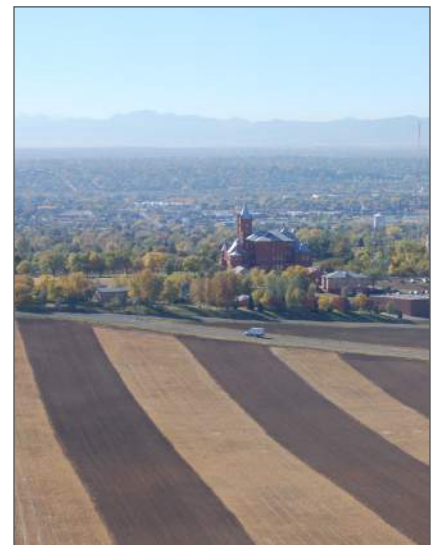
At one of the highest elevations in Westminster, the Westminster Heights area has dramatic views both to the west overlooking the Front Range and to the south with a view of the Downtown Denver skyline and even Pikes Peak far to the south. Centered at Federal Boulevard and West 84th Avenue, this area is characterized with institutional uses such as the historic Westminster Castle and St. Anthony Neighborhood Health Center. There is significant vacant land, as well as redevelopment potential within the St. Anthony property. However, significant infrastructure improvements on- and off-site are necessary for future development of the area, including streets, drainage, water, and wastewater infrastructure.

Convenient access along Federal Boulevard connects this Transition Area to US 36. As with Westminster Station, this location will be informed by the Federal Boulevard Multimodal Transportation Study Development and projects should consult with this corridor plan mindful to form a built environment that supports a dynamic, multimodal corridor and creates a sense of place, connectivity, safety, and economic vitality.

The Westminster Heights area is envisioned to locate residential densities along the east side of Federal Boulevard to help support transit lines and employment development at the St. Anthony campus. The quarter section west of Federal Boulevard, north of West 84th Avenue, east of Lowell Boulevard and south of West 88th Avenue is visualized as an “agrihood” with a robust system of integrated amenities, including opportunities for agricultural production, a community park, viewshed protection, and trail connections. The general vicinity is underserved relative to parks within walking distance of households; therefore, a 25- to 30-acre park site has been identified for the southeast corner of Lowell Boulevard and West 88th Avenue. This is one of the only remaining large development sites in Westminster that could demonstrate

AGRIHOOD

Agrihoods are a type of neighborhood that enables farm-to-table living in a cooperative environment. Instead of being built around a pool or tennis court, these developments are centered around a significantly sized farm, often using the sweat-equity of residents to create a sustainable food system for the entire community. The Urban Land Institute has identified over 90 such developments in the U.S.

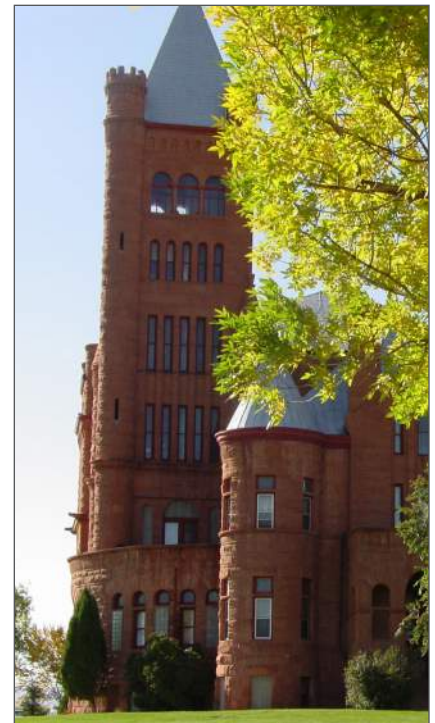




the **Healthy Places** guiding principle through a blend of park spaces, active transportation, and access to local food.

To the east along West 84th Avenue is the St. Anthony 84th Avenue campus. St. Anthony transitioned many programs and services to the 144th Avenue “North” campus, leaving the 84th Avenue campus with an emergency room and services focused on senior needs, now named St. Anthony Neighborhood Health Center. Some of the existing buildings are underutilized, and the expansive parking fields are no longer necessary to support the activities at the site. This creates opportunities for infill and redevelopment centered on access to healthy living. In particular, the presence of senior services makes this an ideal location for senior housing with proximity to established neighborhoods. Behind the St. Anthony medical campus, extensions of Bryant, Clay and Decatur Streets should connect the unbuilt mixed-use and residential areas through to West 88th Avenue and west on West 86th Avenue

New housing south of West 84th Avenue should take care in siting structures so as to both maximize view opportunities for residents, and also to minimize obstructions to the views from West 84th Avenue and Federal Boulevard.



Pillar of Fire

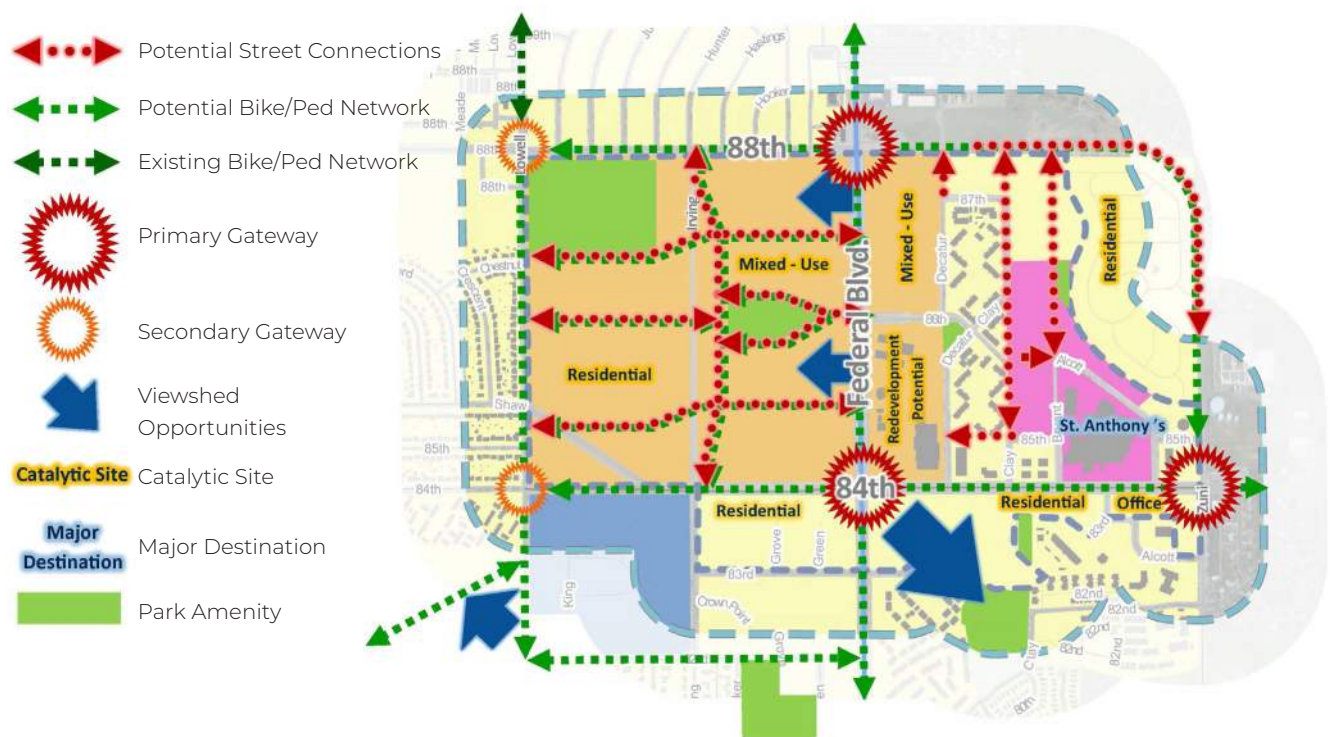


Figure 2-7. Westminster Heights Transition Area Framework

2.3 EMPLOYMENT PLACES

Two transition areas are identified to focus entirely on employment to support further development of the city's economic base in the fields of aerospace; business support services; financial services, healthcare and life sciences; retail, hospitality and entertainment; and technology in information. A limited amount of residential development may further support the employment development in these areas, and incorporation of retail services and amenities is critical to meeting workforce and employer needs in these areas.

WEST 120TH AVENUE ACTIVITY CENTER TRANSITION AREA

Several large employment campuses are located on West 120th Avenue, most notably Maxar Technologies and Park 12 Hundred. In recent years, Maxar consolidated its operations and headquarters in Westminster and is a world leader in commercial satellites, space robotics, and digital imaging; Park 12 Hundred completed some of the city's only sizable industrial spaces, filling in three underutilized parking areas within the former Avaya campus with 325,000 square feet of industrial space. These employment sites are expected to remain stable into the future, however planning for adjacent areas is needed to ensure compatibility. This transition area, located between West 112th and West 124th Avenues west of Huron Street has potential for redevelopment and infill opportunities for commercial, light/flex industrial uses, and a limited degree of residential uses on peripheral sites.

Park 1200 Transition Area

The southern portion, south of Park 12 Hundred, encompasses about 108 acres, with over 50 acres currently vacant. The area is bisected by public open space and the Ranch Creek corridor. Huron Street is generally not residential in character, as it is dominated by businesses and services, including the current medical and office uses, and light industrial uses north of West 116th Avenue. Similarly, on the east side of Huron Street, the City of Northglenn anticipates primarily non-residential uses through the Northglenn Comprehensive Plan. The area is envisioned to add a small neighborhood center at the northwest corner of Huron Street and West 112th Avenue, as well as to expand office and research and development (R&D) uses in the vacant areas along Huron Street. Some medium-density residential development is planned, providing workforce housing opportunities. The T-ball Complex Park could also expand to include the adjacent open space and creek corridor, creating a neighborhood park.

Park Centre Transition Area

North of Park 12 Hundred, across West 120th Avenue is the 311-acre Park Centre area, characterized by small- to medium-sized employers. There are fewer vacant parcels in this area, and fractured ownership limits opportunity for large scale development without parcel consolidation. This area is envisioned to maintain a mix of



Maxar

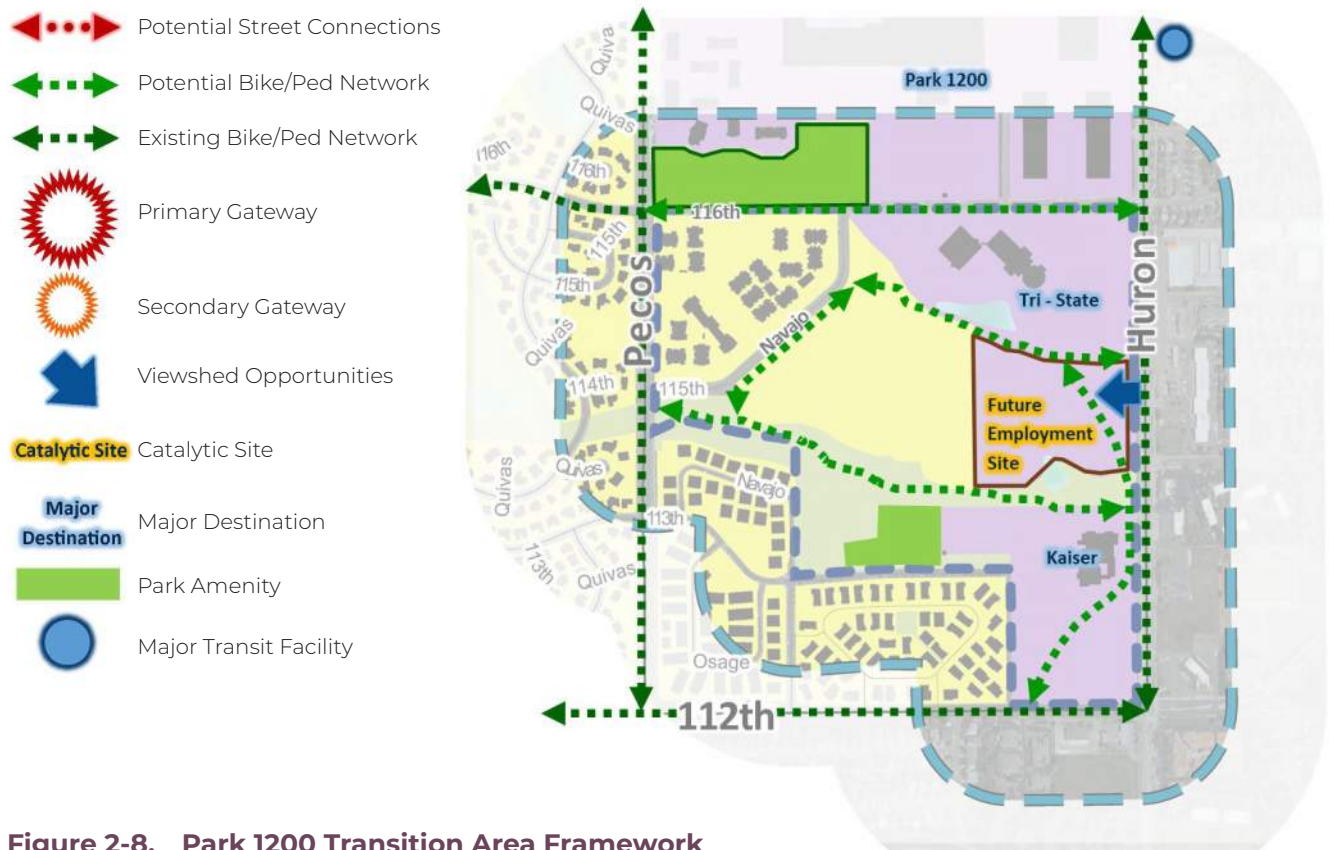


Figure 2-8. Park 1200 Transition Area Framework

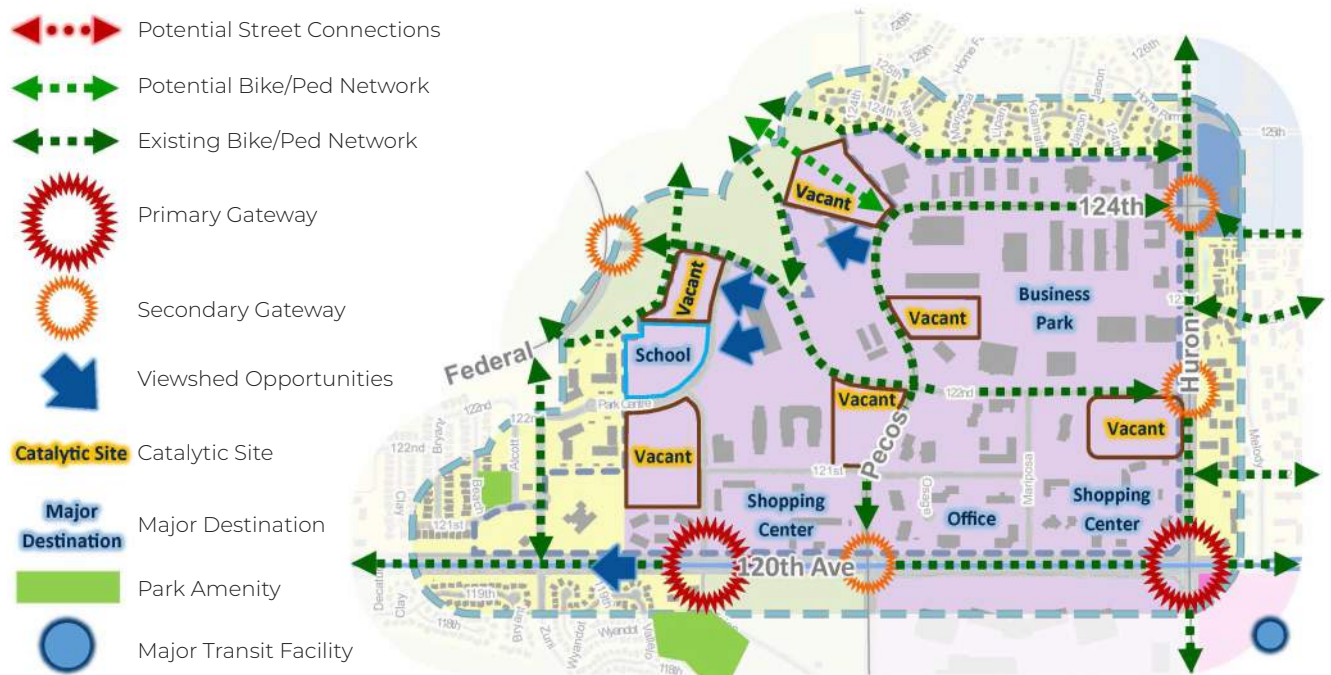


Figure 2-9. Park Centre Transition Area Framework

office buildings with light industrial, flex-spaces and R&D uses. Expansion of existing institutional uses or new institutional uses, such as schools or religious assemblies, are strongly discouraged within this area. Similarly, highway-oriented hotel or commercial uses should be limited to existing retail properties and not further encroach into potential office and light industrial areas.

North Huron Street also has significant roadway capacity to accommodate new development in this Transition Area, as it was sized for the employee and freight movement traffic of the former Lucent Technologies campus. Development in the Transition Area will benefit from close proximity and access to I-25, as well as the Wagon Road Park-n-Ride—the third largest facility in the RTD system with nonstop express bus service to both Downtown Denver and Denver International Airport.



Park Centre Offices



WESTMOOR & VICINITY EMPLOYMENT AREA

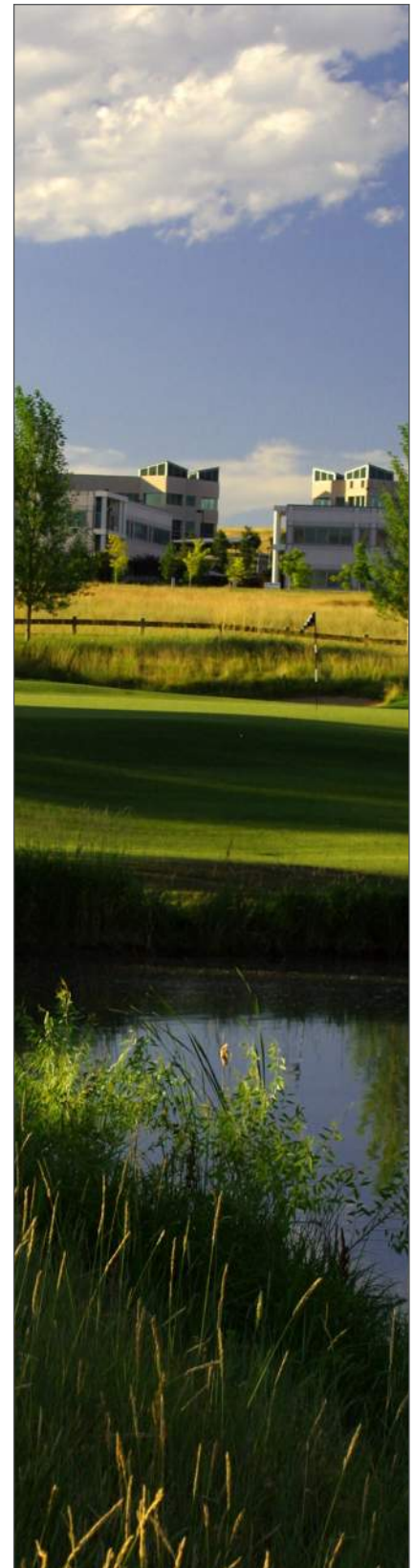
Westmoor features Westminster's largest suburban office campuses, attracting major employers with room to expand and regional access to US 36 and the proposed future Jefferson Parkway. Abutting the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport to the north, and the Walnut Creek Golf Preserve to the south, this Transition Area north of West 108th Avenue and west of Wadsworth Parkway is characterized by meandering roads and integrated green space, and features dramatic views of the Front Range.

Recent and planned expansions of some of these large primary employers include Trimble and Ball. Trimble added an 118,000 square foot office building in 2018 and owns adjacent land for potential future expansion and use for testing new navigation technologies. The Ball Corporation relocated its global headquarters to Westminster and completed a 145,000 square foot expansion to enhance manufacturing, production and test capabilities to provide high-performance phased array antenna and electro-optical solutions for government and commercial customers. The subsidiary companies of Ball Aerospace and Ball Packaging are also major employers within the Ball campus.

Originally planned as a suburban office campus, the 417-acre Transition Area does not include retail, commercial, or residential developments at present. However, employers have expressed a desire for restaurants and services, as well as an interest in opportunities to provide nearby workforce housing. Similarly, to compete with office locations in the US 36 corridor, a greater mix of amenities will be necessary such as a walkable form, dining, support services, and lodging. One potential approach may be formation of an "aerotropolis" to complement work planned in Jefferson County at the Verve development site and the existing aerospace sector in Westminster—one of six key industry clusters identified in the Economic Base and Industry Opportunities in Westminster (2017) study commissioned by the city's Economic Development Department. With a 9,000-foot runway, the airport already functions as a reliever for Denver International Airport.

The future development and buildout of this area is envisioned to introduce flex spaces and more research and development (R&D) facilities. Site design should anticipate a more walkable form with trails through and between development sites and connectivity to workforce housing opportunities across Simms Street in Broomfield. Connections to the adjacent 420-acre Westminster Hills Off-Leash Dog Park and its network of trails is a potential amenity for Westmoor. Strategies should also be identified to encourage heavy truck traffic to use Simms Street to access the proposed future Jefferson Parkway to minimize cut-through traffic from industrial uses in Broomfield.

This area could potentially play a bigger role as a gateway into Westminster if Jefferson Parkway advances to construction with realignment of Simms Street to form an interchange. If



Heritage Golf Course

AEROTROPOLIS

Aerotropolis developments consist of clusters of aerospace businesses and associated development that complement each other and their accessibility to an airport. Such clusters typically include time-sensitive manufacturing and distribution facilities, such as aerospace, biopharma, electronics, and e-commerce; hotel, trade and exhibition complexes; and office space for air-travel intensive executives.

the Jefferson Parkway is completed, retail development may be supported adjacent to Simms Street. Workforce housing in this area could be supported with thoughtful development of the land southwest of West 108th Avenue and Wadsworth Parkway and would further support provision of retail and restaurant uses in Westmoor.

All uses in this area should incorporate appropriate noise abatement measures due to the presence of Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport, whose crosswind runway establishes an approach zone over Westmoor and whose operations for the primary runway form a looped racetrack pattern with the downwind leg over Westmoor.



Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport



Figure 2-10. Westmoor & Vicinity Employment Area Framework



2.4 URBAN RENEWAL AREAS

Urban renewal is a statutory tool to support the redevelopment or rehabilitation of real property in a city through cooperative efforts by private developers and local government. In addressing these barriers to development, urban renewal promotes both private and public investment, leading to job creation, economic development, and increased tax revenue. The formation of an Urban Renewal Area (URA) is governed by Colorado Statute, which defines the criteria for blight designation and establishes the requirement for an urban renewal plan. These plans work in tandem with the Comprehensive Plan to provide vision and direction for redevelopment activities specific to a given URA.

Urban Renewal Areas are administered by the Westminster Economic Development Authority (WEDA), for which city Council members serve as the Board Members. The URA designation allows WEDA to finance capital improvements and land assembly to incentivize redevelopment and improve physical conditions in these designated areas of the city. WEDA collects revenues from property taxes and sales taxes within these areas during the 25-year Tax Increment Financing (TIF) period. This revenue can be used on investments that serve a public purpose, such as parks, utilities, and roads, which then helps to bolster additional private investment.

Westminster Center Reinvestment Plan Area (WURP)

The purpose of this URA was to redevelop the site formerly known as the Westminster Mall. Formed in 2009, the TIF period was established in 2013 and will run through 2038. It corresponds to the redevelopment Focus Area known as Downtown Westminster, which follows the Downtown Specific Plan. Additionally, this area received designation as a federal Opportunity Zone as part of an investment program created by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, which allows for certain private investments to receive tax benefits.

South Westminster

This URA was established in two phases: Phase I was initiated in 1988 and collected its last TIF in 2013, and Phase II TIF ran from 1992 to 2017. It was established to revitalize and redevelop older commercial areas in the general vicinity of West 72nd Avenue and Federal Boulevard. While the first phase focused exclusively on commercial properties, the second covered the industrial area that is now the Focus Area of Westminster Station, which is governed by the Westminster Station Area Specific Plan. Some of the commercial and industrial properties in the Transition Area of Westminster Station were also included in the boundaries of the URA, whereas the residential Harris Park neighborhood was mostly left out. This area is also covered by two Opportunity Zones.

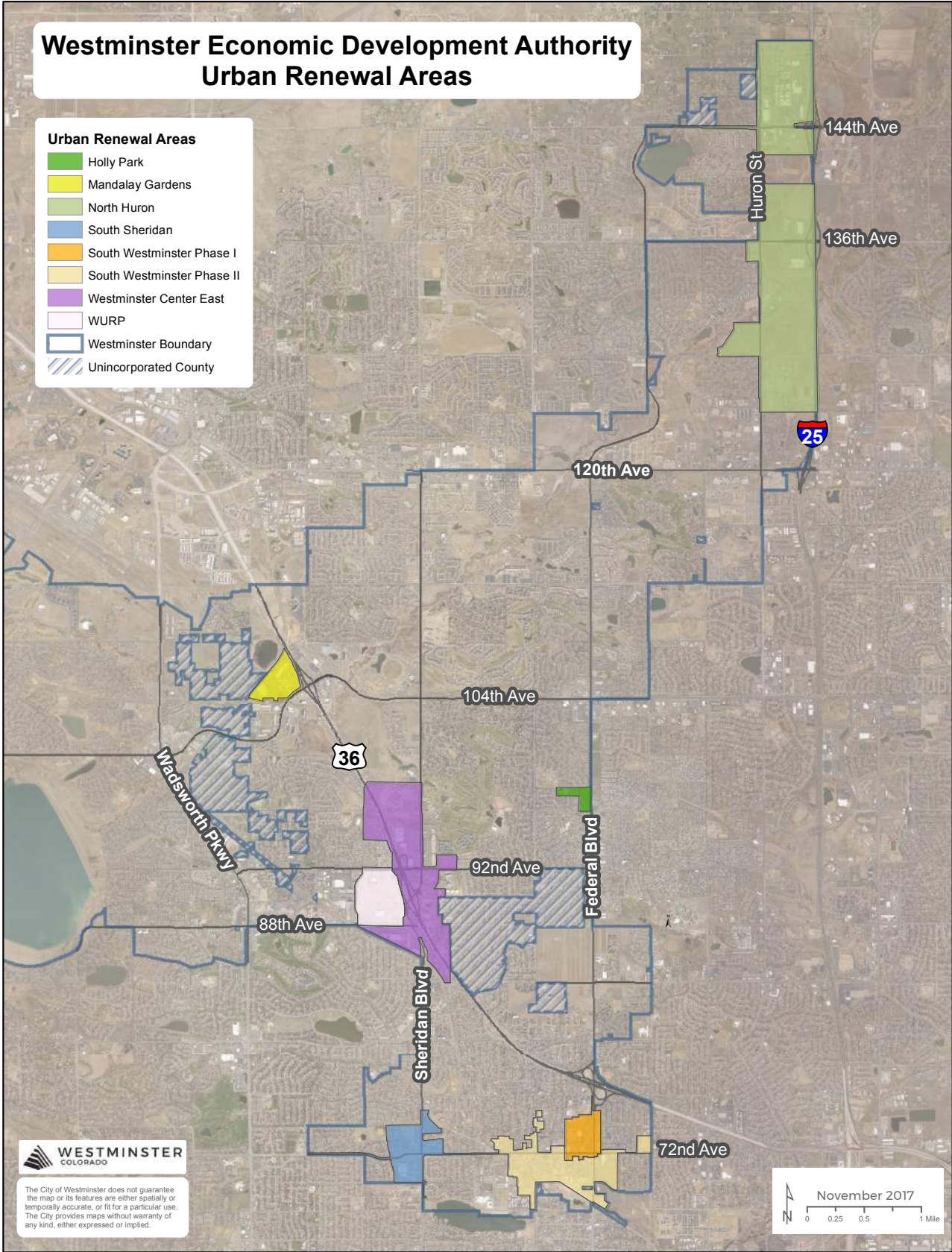


Shoenberg Farm in South Sheridan URA



Westminster Station in South Westminster URA

Figure 2-11. Urban Renewal Areas





North Huron

This is the largest of the urban renewal districts and generally covers the properties between West 124th and West 150th Avenues between I-25 and Huron Street. Historically used for agricultural uses, this area lacked sufficient infrastructure to support the level of development activity desired at these I-25 interchange areas. Established in 2004, the TIF period will end in 2029. This URA corresponds to the North I-25 Focus Area.

Mandalay Gardens

Established in 2003, this URA was intended for redevelopment of the area generally bound by US 36, Church Ranch Boulevard, and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad line. The TIF period will end in 2028. Commonly known as The Shops at Walnut Creek, a portion of it overlaps with the Church Ranch Focus Area.

South Sheridan

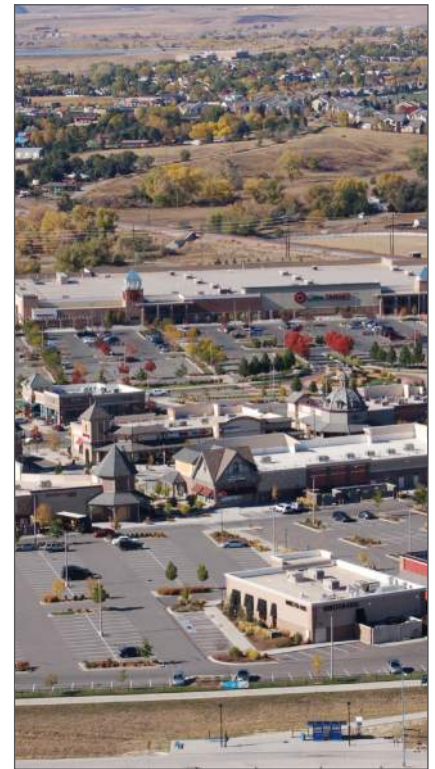
This URA was formed in 2004, and the TIF will run until 2029. Centered around the commercial intersection of Sheridan Boulevard and West 72nd Avenue near the historic Shoenberg Farm property, it covers properties from West 70th to West 75th Avenues, generally bound by Depew and Xavier Streets. The Walmart property makes up the largest portion of the district.

Westminster Center East

Formed in 2003 with TIF expiring in 2028, this district overlaps with the Downtown Westminster Vicinity Transition Area along the southern and eastern boundaries of Downtown, as well as properties to the north. It was established to redevelop the commercial area generally bound by the BNSF railroad line south of Downtown, running north to West 98th Avenue on the west side of Sheridan Boulevard, as well as east of Sheridan Boulevard to Harlan Street up to West 92nd Avenue.

Holly Park

The smallest of the urban renewal districts, this one was formed for the more traditional type of slum/blight clearance when a partially built residential project was abandoned by the developer and left in unsafe condition that posed a threat to public health and safety. Formed in 2004, the TIF will end in 2029. This 23-acre area along the west side of Federal Boulevard between West 96th and just past West 97th Avenues is proposed for new affordable housing, in keeping with the goals and policies established in the Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan.



Mandalay Gardens URA



Westminster Center East URA

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3.0

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

As a long range plan to *Manage Growth* and development of Westminister with a year 2040 outlook, the goal of this Plan is to support *Great Neighborhoods* and to build a sense of place in neighborhoods and commercial districts. One of the methods in this Plan for helping to achieve this goal is to focus the “land use” discussion on the creation and maintenance of recognizable places throughout the city. This chapter establishes goals and polices as well as locational considerations through the Land Use Diagram for a balanced mix of development, redevelopment, and neighborhood stabilization that anticipates future needs. These goals and policies express the intents and actions necessary to guide planning for neighborhoods of all types as the city approaches buildout.



Big Dry Creek Trail

OVERVIEW

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan update builds on the planning paradigm from the 2013 Comprehensive Plan to identify strategic growth on remaining vacant land and redevelopment areas, and provides guidance on anticipated uses and building forms. Emphasis is placed on connecting residential areas with a range of employment opportunities in support of a **Thriving City** and convenient access to activities and services that fulfill the daily needs of a household in support of **Healthy Places**.

Rather than focusing on individual land uses, the 2040 Comprehensive Plan focuses on the character of development in different areas. Whereas land use focuses on the type of use on a given parcel, the land use framework described in this chapter focuses on the overall look and feel of an area such as low density or high density, urban or suburban, auto-oriented or mixed-use and illustrates this through the Land Use Diagram as a companion to the goals and policies. The overall land use framework combines concepts of land use with building form and intensity to describe the character of area being created through the development that occurs. Collectively, these elements function to guide the location and amount of development and inform programming of infrastructure, resources, and public services to support quality of life. This chapter of the Plan defines these character types envisioned for the city and illustrates their locations.

Through a combination of planning tools—including a mix of Planned Unit Development (PUD) and other zone designations, land use planning, design standards, and Specific Area Plans—the city strives to ensure complementary and supportive uses to create a sustainable, high-quality environment for residents and businesses. Effective implementation of this chapter will depend on successful coordination with the Capital Improvement Plan, other *Westminster Forward* plans, and updating the city's development codes and design standards.



3.1 LAND USE CONTEXT

Westminster maintains a variety of land uses that reflect historic settlement patterns and modern development characteristics of the city's highest growth periods from the 1970s through the 1990s. Open space, parks, and recreational amenities are a prominent characteristic of the city's physical landscape, and the city's land use pattern is generally influenced by major regional transportation corridors. For the most part, retail, hotel, and employment uses are clustered along US 36 and I-25 around major interchanges. Outside of these corridors, uses are primarily residential, with parks and open spaces integrated throughout. Smaller- and medium-scale commercial areas are located along arterial streets in the city, including Wadsworth Parkway, Sheridan Boulevard, and Federal Boulevard running north-south, and West 72nd, 88th, 92nd, 100th, and 120th Avenues running east-west. In Historic Westminster, the use pattern is more diverse, particularly south of West 72nd Avenue, where commercial and light industrial uses are focused.

Of the total land area in the city, open space, parks, golf courses and conservation areas comprise over 44%—more than any other land use in the city. These areas are interspersed throughout the city, creating multiple continuous natural and creek corridors that traverse Westminster. A similar proportion of land is residential, accounting for another 38% of land area with the majority being low density. Once land is committed to residential use, it is very unlikely to change, which makes the types of development for remaining residential land extremely important to accommodate healthy living, changing demographics, and future housing needs.

Commercial retail and service uses occupy 6% of the land area, with the remaining land area comprised of 6% public/ institutional uses, 3% office, 1.5% industrial, 0.04% mixed-use, and 7% vacant.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

Land use patterns of today and those projected for the future, are at the heart of the planning process. Patterns of growth affect the quality of life in the community, including traffic; noise and air quality; opportunities for jobs, housing and business development; community character and design; and the need for public facilities and services of all types. As Westminster continues to evolve, identifying and distributing a supportive balance of character types is critical to community well-being, fiscal resilience, economic health, and environmental stewardship. The 2013 Comprehensive Plan established a pattern of land uses that would support the community. However, the [Westminster Forward](#) public input process identified several issues for the Comprehensive Plan update to address related to land use and development.

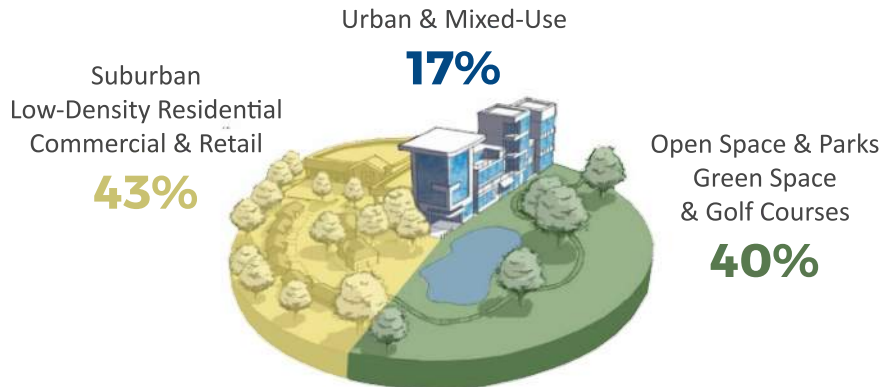


*Proposed Site of Future
RTD Station*



Future Mixed-Use off of Westminster Blvd.

Figure 3-1. Projected Distribution of Future Character Types



Mixed-Use Areas

As the city nears build out, much of the remaining opportunities to shape future growth will be through infill of under-developed properties or through redevelopment of obsolete or declining commercial areas. The 2013 Plan anticipated the need to provide challenged retail and commercial areas opportunities to add uses and/or redevelop, and thus, many sites were identified for Mixed-Use development. To respond to the continued decline of traditional retail, many commercial areas in Westminster will need to be considered for other uses such as restaurants, microbreweries, hotels, and residential uses. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan helps to clarify anticipated uses and both horizontal and vertical building formats to increase predictability and ensure manageable resource impacts.

The city has two Specific Plan Districts: Downtown Westminster and Westminster Station. Due to the community visioning processes that informed these plans and the subsequent investments by the city and regional partners, these are locations prioritized for vertical mixed-use development. In the future, these locations will feature higher concentrations of housing, employment, restaurant, and entertainment uses, as well as other hospitality-related uses. Other areas designated as Mixed-Use in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan are trending toward horizontal land use mixes, including Brookhill, Church Ranch, and Orchard Town Center within the North I-25 Focus Area. For more detail, see Chapter 2: Community Places.

Residential

Recent patterns of residential development in the city have consisted mainly of lower density single-family and some higher density multi-family. “Missing Middle” housing consists of product types such as townhomes or small lot homes to provide product choices and mobility within the housing market for those that cannot afford or do not want conventional single-family homes and who may not want apartment living. Other than a few noteworthy projects, there has been only modest development of new medium density product types such as townhomes or



other “missing middle” housing types. Additional supportive information is found in Chapter 7: Housing & Neighborhoods. Changing demographics underscore the need to accommodate aging in place and different household compositions and lifestyles. Provisions to allow residential densities greater than low density single-family and less than apartments would facilitate these types of long-term shifts in the residential market well into the future.

Most neighboring Front Range communities have begun to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to provide options for intergenerational living or separate live/work spaces within residential neighborhoods. The benefits of ADUs include the opportunity to expand homeownership by introducing a revenue stream to ease the cost burden of home ownership, while also creating an opportunity for intergenerational housing. Thoughtful provisions for ADU design should include water tap structure; adequate setbacks and bulk controls to ensure light, air and play space in yards; design compatibility with the neighborhood character; as well as adequate parking and stormwater management. Though the Comprehensive Plan establishes provisions for ADUs in the land use character types in Section 3.4, future implementation actions will be required to allow ADUs due to prevalence of established PUD development and associated homeowner association restrictions and also due to the lack of corresponding provisions in the municipal code to allow ADUs.

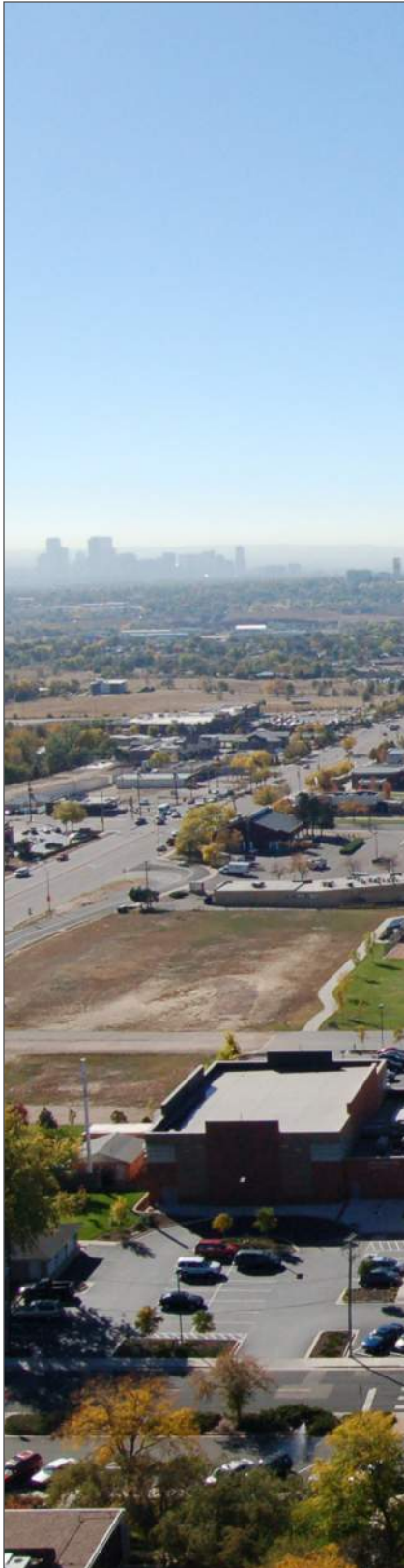
Employment

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan established a goal of improving jobs-housing balance by increasing the amount of employment within the city. The plan primarily relied upon the land use element to accomplish this goal: increasing the city's land area dedicated for office use from 2.2% to 5%, and increasing flex/light industrial land from 1.4% to 2.1% over the 2013 plan's 2035 horizon. Given the fluid nature of employment, housing and commuter patterns, the jobs-housing balance must be viewed in the context of the region, as businesses cannot succeed without sufficient housing opportunities for employees, and residents are participants in a regional economy that offers educational and employment opportunities across a broader geographic area. As identified in Chapter 6: Economic Resilience, concern for employee housing is a concern for businesses in Westminster.

Additionally, to plan for an effective employment base, transportation networks, utility systems, and the regulatory system that governs the type of land uses, building forms and availability of services and amenities are also important factors. In *Westminster Forward* discussions, stakeholders indicated that existing office designations do not sufficiently allow for the type of spaces that are desired by small start-up firms, which often drive innovation. Such firms turn to “flex” or light industrial type of spaces rather than typical office buildings. This is problematic due to the lack of available sites within the city that allow flex and light industrial development. A secondary challenge is



Low density homes at Legacy Ridge West



Retail opportunities on Federal Blvd. near Historic Westminister

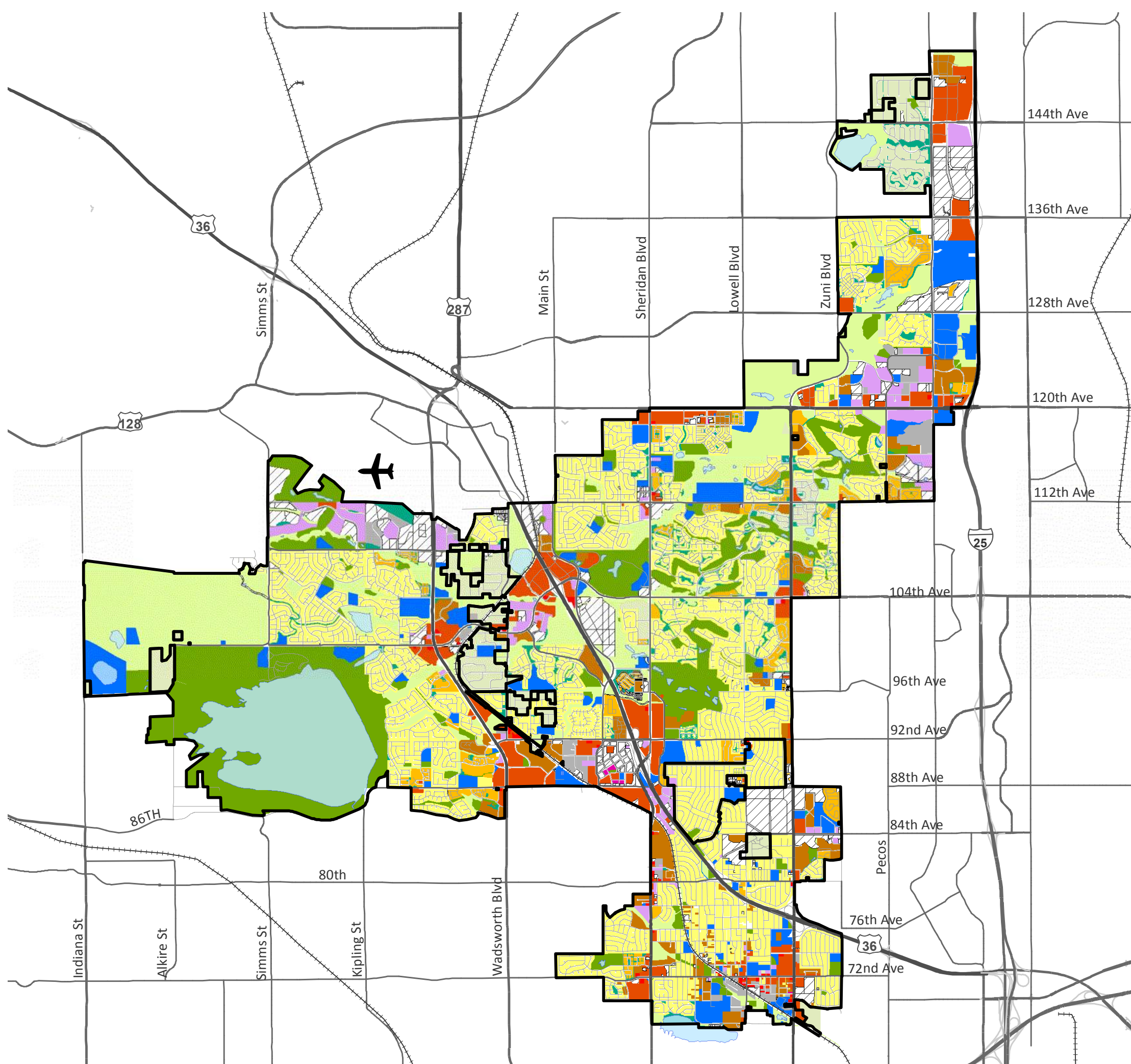
that, employers have also identified highly amenitized, transit-accessible settings as preferred locations. This reflects a change from the low-rise surface-parked office environments that have been common in the city for decades. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan, therefore, seeks to support changing employment trends that are anticipated to endure in future years.

Retail Development

The type, location, scale, and amount of Retail Commercial land is critical to the city's fiscal sustainability because sales tax is the largest source of municipal revenue, which is typical under Colorado law. The 2013 Comprehensive Plan anticipated a shrinking need for retail space, reducing the amount of land planned for retail commercial uses from 5% of the city's land area to 3.8%. For example, redevelopment of the former Westminister Mall site will result in less retail space at build out than the previous mall but create new options for employment, housing and entertainment. Other retail challenges have included the expansion of additional restaurant uses into retail centers, which has also challenged the water and sewer infrastructures. Some retail businesses have shifted more of their space to function for fulfillment of online and phone orders, as well as niche uses such as cafes within the greater store area. A finer grained approach to the city's remaining retail areas would improve infrastructure planning and provide better direction for those seeking to redevelop retail centers.

VACANT LAND

There are currently 1,071.8 acres of vacant developable land in the city. The majority of vacant land is located adjacent to major corridors like US 36 and I-25, and present opportunities for the city to continue to diversify its land use mix and define its character through identification features along these heavily trafficked highways. The most substantial vacant parcels are located in the North I-25 and Church Ranch Focus Areas and the Westminister Heights and Westmoor Transition Areas. Chapter 2: Community Places provides information on the vision and development tools for these areas, as well as for recent significant large-scale developments that have occurred at Park 12 Hundred, Orchard Town Center, Downtown Westminister, Hyland Village, and Church Ranch. Annexation opportunities also exist within Westminister's Growth Management Area, located mainly to the south and west of the city and a few primarily residential enclaves in Jefferson and Adams Counties. The Growth Management Area encompasses 1,452 acres outside of Westminister's city limits, with 983 located in Jefferson County and the remainder in Adams County. Some of these areas are already within the Westminister water service area, while others are not and therefore the ability of to serve these areas must be balanced with distribution of water supply within the city. See Appendix D, Annexation Analysis, for additional discussion on future annexation.



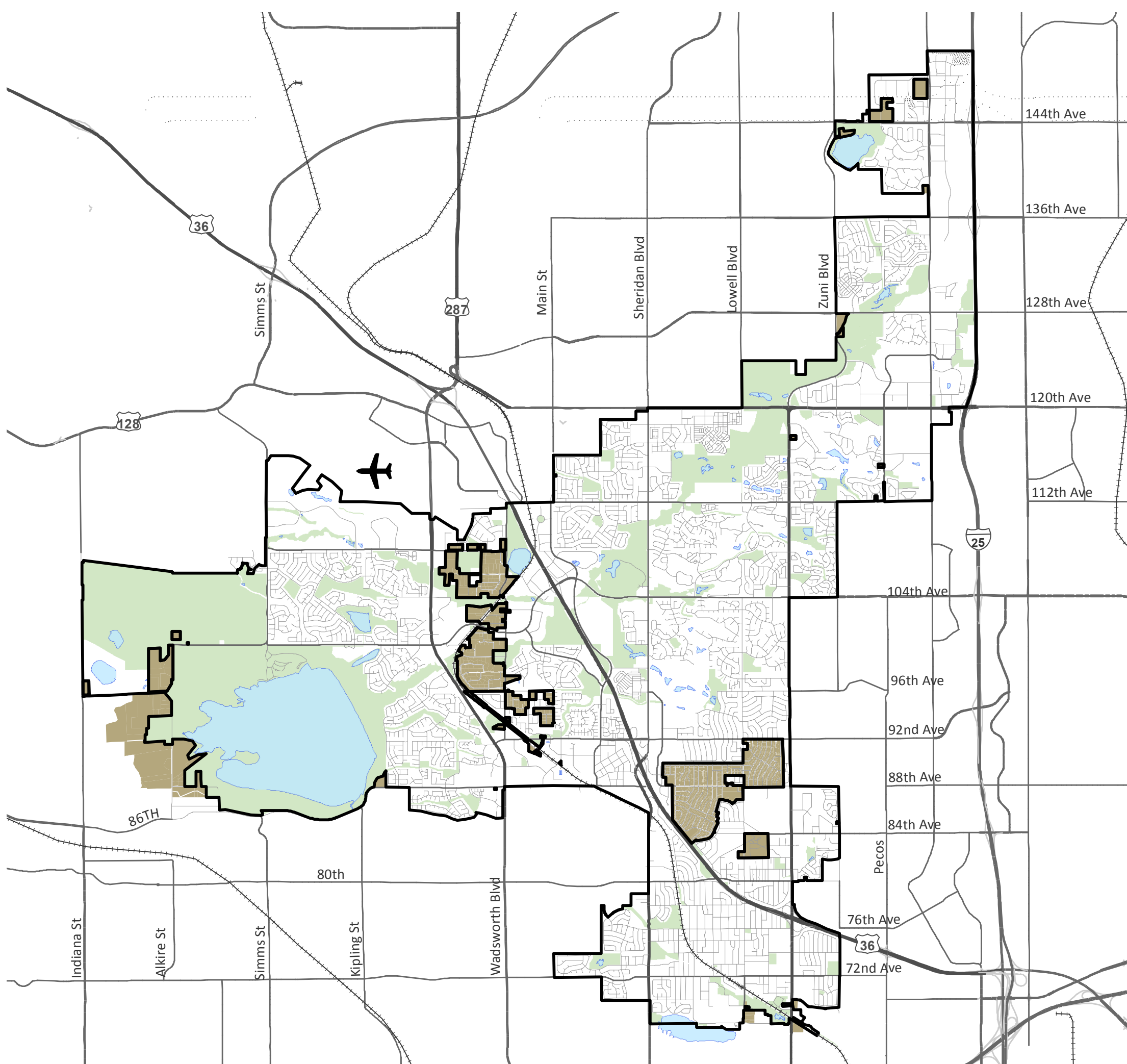
Map 3-1. Existing Land Use Map

Legend

- Very Low Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed-Use
- Office
- Retail Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Industrial
- Public / Institutional
- Open Space
- Parks and Recreation
- Private Park / Private Open Space
- Vacant
- Highway
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Westminster



0 0.5 1 2
Miles



Map 3-2. Growth Management Area

Legend

- Potential Future Annexation Areas
- Highway
- Major roads
- Local roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Parks and Open Space
- Westminster



0 0.5 1 2 Miles



3.2 NEIGHBORHOOD UNIT

Through *Westminster Forward* public engagement there was a preference for mixed-use development patterns, but in strategic locations and composition. Diversity of housing types, supported by nearby activities such as restaurants, retail, and a park for community gathering, were identified as elements of the ideal neighborhood. This included the desire to incorporate parks as social spaces and civic hubs. There was also an interest in walkable, well-connected environments with smaller, neighborhood services closer to housing. Other feedback indicated the need to address changing demographics and associated housing needs such as housing formats for varying household types and ages.

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan responds to interests about neighborhood planning with a “Neighborhood Unit” concept. Rather than a geographical designation, the Neighborhood Unit is a framework for evaluating uses and activities in a context beyond a particular parcel or development site.

Neighborhood Units are generally 40 to 250 acres and may extend beyond a particular subdivision or development boundary to incorporate uses and activities to fulfill daily needs of residents—typically within a quarter-mile or five minute walk without crossing major arterial streets. While primarily composed of lower density housing, Neighborhood Units often may feature mixed-use areas along the edges or at key access points where transportation



Bradburn Village



facilities support higher densities or commercial uses. An interconnected street pattern minimizes distances for pedestrians, cyclists, seniors, and children to access amenities and services in and around the neighborhood. Access to parks, open spaces, and other areas to gather and play are key attributes, typically with a focal point located near the center of the Neighborhood Unit. Active transportation and access to outdoors also promote public health in support of the Health & Wellness element (Chapter 5) of the Comprehensive Plan.

The components within a Neighborhood Unit may be developed on different timelines, therefore the Neighborhood Unit concept may be used to evaluate future development and the degree to which development proposals complement the area in support of the **Thriving City** and **Great Neighborhoods** guiding principles. The Neighborhood Unit concept will provide a lens for evaluating future development proposals as further detailed in Chapter 9, Plan Administration.

LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT / GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Low impact development (LID), also commonly referred to as “green stormwater infrastructure” is an approach to surface water runoff management that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle.

LEED (LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN)

"LEED" is a rating system that integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism, and green building into a national system for neighborhood design. LEED certification provides independent, third-party verification that a development's location and design meet accepted high levels of environmentally responsible, sustainable development.

3.3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Comprehensive Plan supports an inclusive sustainable approach for future growth in the city. Sustainable development is more than environmental measures; rather, it more broadly covers development that meets the varied needs of the community without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Policies that support and encourage sustainability are integrated throughout the Comprehensive Plan, as well as the Sustainability Plan. This section introduces the city's approach to sustainable development.

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Westminster's development and Planned Unit Development (PUD) processes and their relationship to the Comprehensive Plan create a flexible approach to development that considers unique site or use characteristics. Since much of the city is zoned PUD, more specific uses are delineated as part of the approval process and must be consistent with the land use designation in the Comprehensive Plan. Specific Plan Districts (SPDs) are another mechanism to regulate land uses and development within Focus Areas, as identified in Chapter 2. This designation is used for areas of the city with a Specific Plan that have uniquely important development or redevelopment opportunities with citywide benefits.

Future opportunities for growth and revitalization of older areas generally include small infill development and redevelopment of existing properties. The PUD system works well for large sites, but smaller sites require a nimbler avenue to mitigate development risk and provide neighbors with a clearer expectation of applicable



standards and the resulting form. Using the Comprehensive Plan with properly aligned zoning districts may reduce confusion in the development process and increase transparency for the public.

SITE AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Sustainable site planning practices may mitigate human created impacts such as energy and water consumption, solid waste production, stormwater runoff, and travel habits. Many of the city's existing regulations and open space and stormwater management practices reflect the city's philosophy toward sustainable growth and site design. Through the city's landscape and stormwater management regulations, developments are encouraged to design sites to reduce water consumption and increase on-site mitigation of stormwater. Regulations encourage green infrastructure such as rain gardens to increase on-site infiltration. The city's landscape regulations also encourage use of native planting that reduces the need for irrigation. Strategies to increase the urban tree canopy further work to mitigate impacts of urban heat island, improve air quality through carbon sequestration, and further reduce the need for stormwater management infrastructure.

Sustainable development also supports the **Healthy Places** guiding principle with several considerations. Thoughtful placement of and access to parks and open spaces, trail connections, and both passive and active recreation ensures equity in fitness opportunities. Promoting year-around healthy food outlets throughout the city supports nutrition and resilience when grocers stock is depleted during a hazard event. Compact or clustered development provides opportunities to preserve open space lands and natural features, and connections to the city's robust trail system provides opportunities for ease of mobility.

The location of buildings, mix of land uses, and intensity of development also have an impact on sustainability. Building orientation that maximizes internal access to daylight and minimizes exposure to intense sun can have an impact on a project's energy consumption. Use of on-site alternative energy production like solar panels can also reduce a project's impact on the environment. At the development and citywide scale, site design measures that can contribute to sustainable growth include location of higher-intensity development close to transit stations and mixed-use neighborhood centers that reduce the need for vehicle travel. The Plan emphasizes pedestrian connectivity and access to transit as key elements of mixed-use activity centers, neighborhood design and employment centers.

LEED-ND

"LEED" stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a United States-based rating system that integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism, and green building into neighborhood design ("ND"). LEED-ND recognizes developments that protect and enhance the overall health, natural environment, and quality of life. The rating system encourages best practices by:

- Promoting the location and design of neighborhoods that reduce vehicle miles travelled (VMT)
- Creating developments where jobs and services are accessible by foot or public transit
- Promoting an array of green building and green infrastructure practices, particularly for more efficient energy and water use
- Protecting and conserving environmental features through the maintenance of natural areas and "smart location" choices

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

The United States Access Board defines Universal Design as “the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.”

ROCKY MOUNTAIN METROPOLITAN AIRPORT AND AIRPORT ZONES

The Airports Environs Land Use Plan establishes guidance on compatible development around Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport. The Airport Influence Area is that property within the environs of the Airport, where particular land uses either are influenced by or will influence the operation of the airport, in either a positive or negative manner. This area considers Runway Protection Zones, Approach Zones, Traffic Pattern Areas, and Airport noise contours down to 65 Day/Night Level (DNL) and then establishes a buffer around those features that extends to prominent geographic features and roads.

BUILDING DESIGN

Sustainable building design is also encouraged for all types of development through the city's development codes, construction standards and historic preservation efforts. Green building design impacts all aspects of the built form—from the exterior materials of a building to the internal mechanical systems. The city encourages high quality, durable building materials, high-efficiency water fixtures, and efficient building systems for all development. Where possible, developments are encouraged to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) rating or similar third-party rating to maximize the exterior and interior building quality, which is especially important for employment uses, where people spend a significant amount of time. Further future generations benefit from construction that is well designed for energy efficiency and construction techniques that resist damage by moisture, wind and/or fire.

In consideration of the high percentage of the Westminster population with disabilities and the need to provide housing opportunities for seniors wishing to age in place, site and building design should use Universal Design principles to promote access, to the greatest extent feasible, for all people regardless of age, size, ability, or disability. This supports the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), but also this Plan's **Thriving City** and **Healthy Places** guiding principles.

LOCATION COMPATIBILITY

Significant portions of the western side of the city are in proximity to the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport. To promote compatibility with aviation activity, additional design considerations may be required on new development such as increased noise attenuation through insulation and triple-paned windows. Additional site and design requirements may also include limitations on lighting and other design features that cause glare such as solar panels, and chimney or exhaust features that may impact airport operations. Special care should be taken for establishment of any additional residential development within close proximity of the Airport.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

A key consideration with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan is the interrelationship of land use and the city's financial sustainability. Because land uses have different impacts on municipal finances, a balanced mix of land use types is needed to ensure future resiliency. An analysis of the Land Use Diagram was conducted to model net revenues or deficits resulting from build out. This analysis identified a positive revenue position for the City. The model separately considered a “stress test” scenario with only the planned residential development occurring with no new commercial development; this scenario was roughly neutral with neither a positive nor negative fiscal outcome. For this reason, the Land Use Diagram balances both residential and commercial character types in support of future resiliency.



3.4 LAND USE FRAMEWORK

The land use framework embodies the community's vision of how Westminster should evolve over the next 20 years and support the city's financial resiliency. The intent of the framework is to establish the direction and tools with which to realize this vision. Key elements of the framework include a character patterns to support existing neighborhoods with locations for employment and new housing. The location and description of different land use character types is based on existing uses and development patterns, community discussions, data analysis, and coordination with other *Westminster Forward* planning efforts. Generally, the most intensive types of land uses occur in clusters or nodes, adjacent to supporting transportation infrastructure.

LAND USE DIAGRAM

The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Diagram (Map 3-3) identifies where retention of existing uses is desired, where existing neighborhoods are identified for stabilization, and locations of opportunities for new types of uses in the future. The diagram does this through designation of the location, type and distribution of land uses throughout the city. Land use character types — shown as colors and graphic patterns on the diagram—allow for a range of activities within each type. The diagram is a graphic representation of policies contained in this Comprehensive Plan and is to be used and interpreted in conjunction with goals and policies throughout the Plan. Focus and Transition Areas identified in Chapter 2, Community Places, each feature a framework graphic to further guide development in these locations beyond the more general designation on the Land Use Diagram.

DENSITY AND INTENSITY

The Comprehensive Plan establishes density and intensity expectations for each land use character type. Residential densities are expressed as dwelling units (DU) per gross acre, including land for public streets, storm drainage and other rights of way or dedications. This does not include land located within a designated 100-year floodplain. It is noted that while consideration has been given to general known constraints in the Land Use Diagram, the particular uses and densities on a site may be limited due to specific site constraints such as topography, drainage patterns, floodplains, required rights-of-way, water supply, sewer impact, the city's adopted design standards, public land dedication, or other public improvements.

DENSITY AND FLOOR AREA RATIOS (FAR)

Calculation

Calculation of both density (expressed as dwelling units per gross acre) and FAR (expressed as total building square footage to land square footage) is based on the gross site. See graphic below.

The calculation of FAR only includes gross building area; basements and parking structures area are excluded. FAR may be calculated using the total of all lots within the development based on the PDP.

Minimums

When not located within a Specific Plan area, minimum FAR may be reduced for sites located more than 1/2 mile from an existing or planned commuter rail station or more than 1/4 mile from an Express Bus Stop as depicted in Map 7-1.

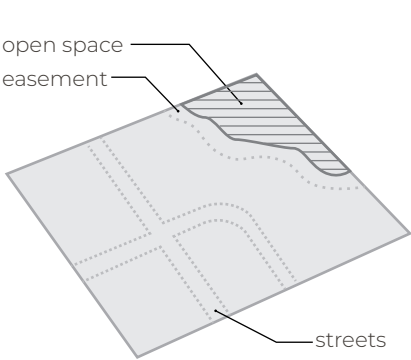
Maximums

The maximum density of FAR may not be achievable on all sites due to site constraints such as topography or site area.

To address the city's varied housing needs, three avenues are provided that modify provisions of the land use character types.

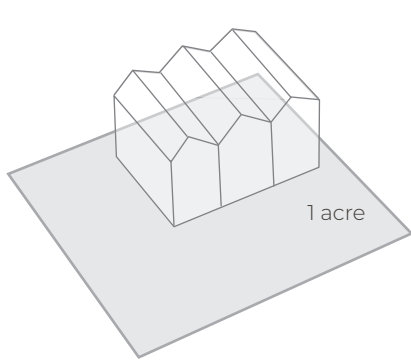
- 1. Accessory dwelling units (ADU) may be permitted on single family lots 6,000 square feet or greater, subject to applicable provisions of the Development Code and/or PUD for a given location. The ADU shall be considered accessory to the primary dwelling unit and, therefore, not tabulated separately for purposes of maximum density.
- 2. Special needs or congregate senior housing facilities with beds rather than individual housekeeping units with kitchens may calculate density at a ratio of 2.5 beds per one dwelling unit, for example a 4-acre site with a character type that allows 18 units per acre could be allowed a congregate care facility with 180 beds or 72 individual housekeeping units.
- 3. Employment land uses may include an internally accessed caretaker unit when subordinate to the primary employment use.

A maximum permitted floor area ratio (FAR) is specified for mixed-use and non-residential uses. FAR expresses the ratio of total building square footage to land square footage. For example, an FAR of 2.0 means that for every square foot of land, a developer may build two square feet of building space. Where an FAR is specified for mixed-use classifications, the FAR applies to both residential and non-residential building space, excluding basements, structured or surface parking. Similar to residential densities, maximum FARs may not be achievable due to site constraints.



Gross Site Acreage/Area

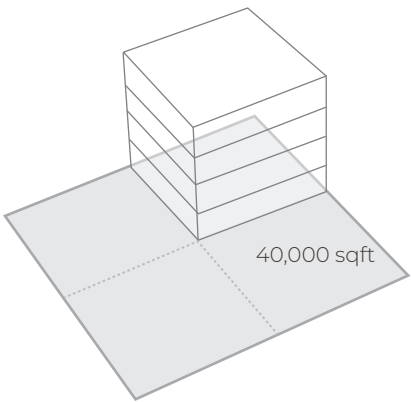
The gross site acreage (or area) encompasses the entire site, including area dedicated for open space, streets, and public easements, as illustrated above. The full acreage of the site (gray area above) is used in the calculation of density or FAR.



Density

$$\frac{\text{Dwelling Units}}{\text{Total Site Acres}} = \frac{3 \text{ du}}{1 \text{ acre}}$$

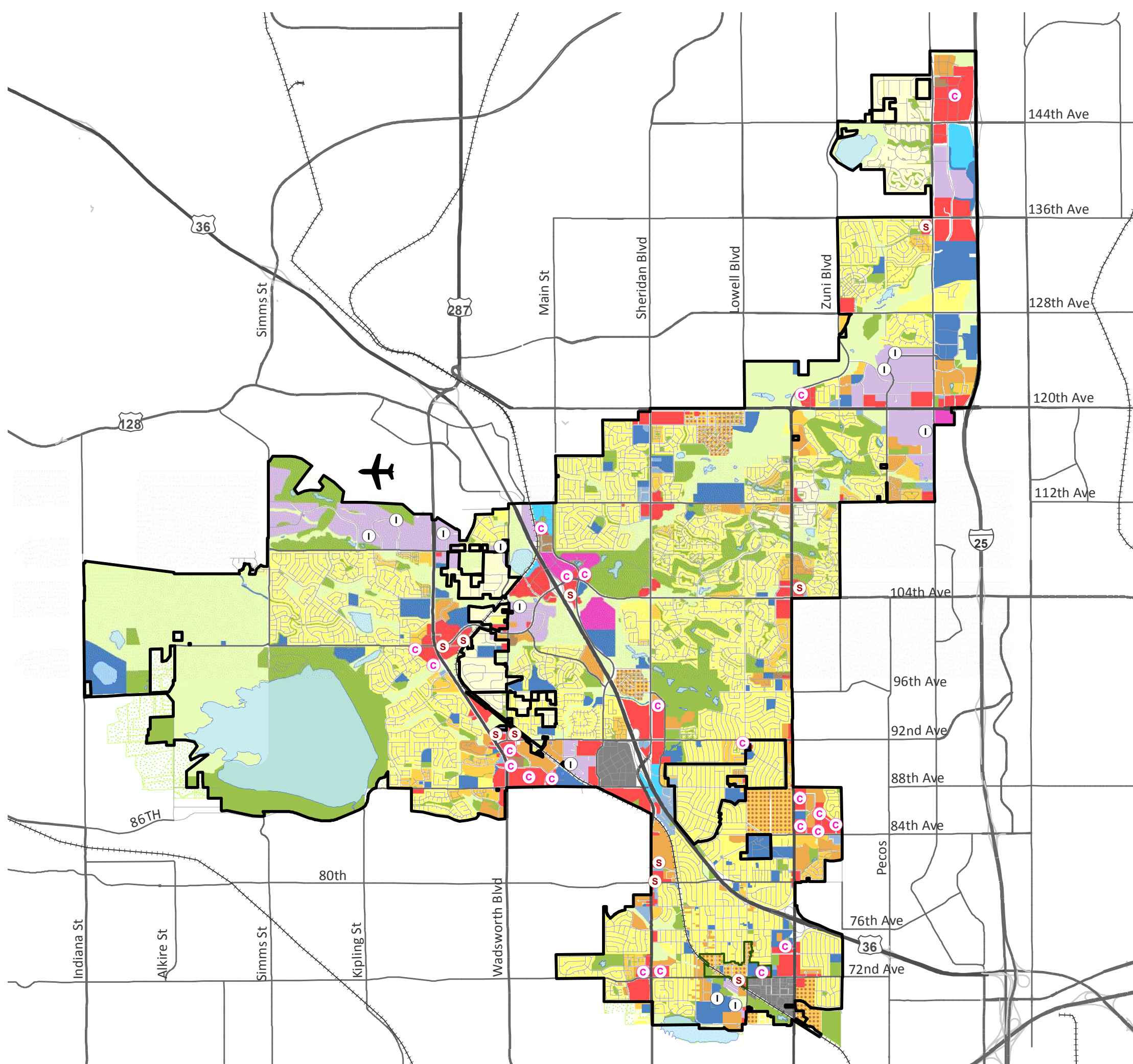
Shown above, 3.0 du/acre, where 3 dwelling units (du) sit on one acre of gross site acreage.



Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

$$\frac{\text{Total Building Area}}{\text{Total Site Area}} = \frac{40,000 \text{ sqft.}}{40,000 \text{ sqft.}}$$

Shown above, an FAR of 1.0 where a building with 4 floors of 10,000 sqft. each (40,000 sqft. total) sits on a parcel of 40,000 sqft. gross site area.



Map 3-3. Land Use Diagram

- Residential Estate
- Residential Low Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Suburban Multi-Family
- Urban Multi-Family
- Mixed-Use Neighborhood
- Specific Area Plan
- Employment-Flex
- Neighborhood Office
- Employment-Office/Institutional Campus
- Public/Quasi Public
- Commercial
- Mixed-Use Activity Center
- Parks/Golf Courses
- Open Space/Creek Corridor
- Agricultural/Conservation Area
- C Commercial Mixed Use
- S Service Commercial
- I Industrial
- Harris Park Community Vision Plan
- Highway
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Westminister





LAND USE CHARACTER TYPES

Land use character types are the tools used to define the city's vision and intent for development citywide. They provide overarching direction for land use on a specific site. For the majority of the city's established development, more specific uses are delineated on a property's approved Planned Unit Development (PUD), which must be consistent with the property's Comprehensive Plan land use designation. For properties that are conventionally zoned (such as Commercial C-1, Business B-1, etc.), the Westminster Municipal Code provides greater detail on specific uses permitted within each zoning district.

This section describes each of the land use character types shown in Map 3-3: Land Use Diagram. Each type is described by representative images and text, with a "Development Standards" table that addresses land use and development characteristics. Within the table, land uses are listed as:

- **Primary.** Primary Uses are intended to be predominant and reflect either existing or anticipated land uses. These uses define and enhance the built character of an area and support fiscal resiliency as the city nears buildout. In residential character types, a listing of housing product types is provided to assist in interpretation of the classification. These product types are based on typical building patterns within Westminster relative to format and scale but do not distinguish housing tenure.
- **Secondary.** Secondary Uses are not intended to be dominant within a character type and are evaluated on a case by case basis to determine appropriateness. These uses may be limited based on the location and compatibility with adjacent land uses. Limitations may include building area or proportion of a project, recommended format or placement on a property. Secondary Uses are not permitted until substantial establishment of primary uses within a given character type. In general, secondary uses shall not exceed 25% of the land area of the character type. Secondary Uses may not be viable or appropriate on a given property but rather considered within the intent of the land use character type as it is applied across the city.

Development characteristics in the table include maximum and minimum densities and/or floor area ratios (FARs), minimum lot size (for residential uses), and distribution of uses. In some cases, qualifications exist to establish a use at a given location. For example, Suburban Multi-Family and Urban Multi-Family have minimum lot sizes to establish multi-family uses.

In addition to the uses described in each character type to follow, public/quasi-public uses—including government offices, police and fire stations, public and state-chartered schools, non-commercial agriculture and places of worship—are permitted in all land use types except for park and open space classifications, subject to the development review process. Private schools and child care facilities are permitted in all residential land use types. Land uses may also be subject to additional review or permitting processes as required by the Westminster Municipal Code.

A number of uses that rarely occur in Westminster are identified as potentially prohibited because they may have negative economic, social or physical impacts on existing and planned neighborhoods or community gathering locations. These uses include pawn shops, tattoo parlors, video and other arcades, night clubs, off-track betting, auction houses, billiard halls, gun shops, adult businesses, check cashing facilities, payday lending, dollar stores, and day labor services. These businesses generally are not permitted in new development, but may be considered on commercial and mixed-use sites in select circumstances. Size of the proposed use, visibility of the use and its proximity to economic growth areas (identified in Chapter 2), residential uses, parks and open spaces, public or quasi-public uses are key considerations for such uses.



RESIDENTIAL ESTATE

This character type provides for single family detached residences developed at densities lower than typically found in urban areas. Residential Estate is generally appropriate in areas distant from activity centers where development characteristics feature large lots. This designation may serve as a transition between rural and more urban areas. The prevailing lot size on adjacent lots shall inform the allowable density on a given site.



Table 3-1. Residential Estate Development Standards

Land Use	Requirement
Primary Uses	Single Family Detached Residences; Non-commercial Agriculture
Secondary Uses	Non-commercial Recreational Uses; Child Care Facilities; Congregate Care Facilities
Development Characteristics	Requirement
Form and Guidelines	Buildings 1 to 2 stories (not including basements); Large setbacks; Large block pattern
Density	Typically 1.0 du/acre but allowed up to 2.5 du/acre where the adjacent established prevailing lot sizes are compatible.
Minimum Lot Size	17,500 square feet; may be reduced to 10,000 square feet where the adjacent prevailing lot pattern is compatible.



RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY

This character type provides primarily for single family detached residences and paired homes. Residential Low Density is generally appropriate in locations outside of activity centers in areas where development characteristics are suburban. The prevailing lot size and densities on adjacent lots shall inform the allowable density on a given site.

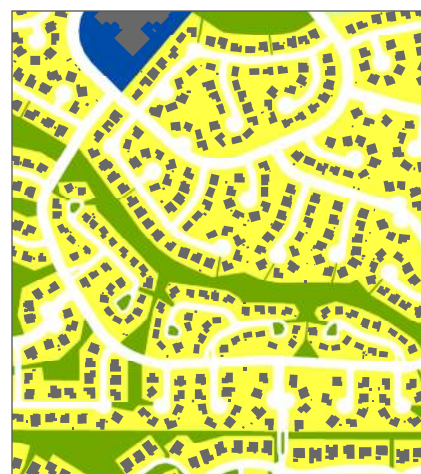


Table 3-2. Residential Low Density Development Standards

Land Use	Requirement
Primary Uses	Single Family Detached Residences; Paired Homes
Secondary Uses	Duplexes; Patio Homes; Townhomes; Congregate care facilities; Non-commercial Recreational Uses; Child Care Facilities; Senior Housing
Development Characteristics	Requirement
Form and Guidelines	Buildings 1 to 2 stories (not including basements); Front and rear setbacks sufficient to provide recreation/leisure space; Access to community parks, trails and/open space; Interconnected street system
Density	Typically up to 3.5 du/acre; allowed up to 5 du/acre upon City Council approval where the adjacent established prevailing lot sizes and densities are compatible.



RESIDENTIAL MEDIUM DENSITY

This character type accommodates a mix of housing types from single family residences (attached and detached) and duplexes to townhomes to support missing middle housing choices. This designation is appropriate for bypassed parcels surrounded by existing development within one half-mile of activity centers and transit. Single family homes are expected to be in alley-loaded format where transportation networks permit. This designation may be used as a transitional buffer between lower density residential uses and nonresidential uses, major roadways, or parks and open spaces. Sites 10 acres or greater are expected to incorporate a mix of different housing product types and reflect the spirit of a mixed-use neighborhood. The prevailing lot size on adjacent lots as well as access to transit, employment and services shall inform the allowable density on a given site.



Table 3-3. Residential Medium Density Development Standards

Land Use	Requirement
Primary Uses	Single Family Detached; Single Family Attached; Paired Homes; Duplexes; Patio Homes; Townhomes
Secondary Uses	Non-commercial Recreational Uses; Child Care Facilities; Congregate Care Facilities; Senior Housing
Development Characteristics	Requirement
Form and Guidelines	Buildings 1 to 2 stories (not including basements), but allowed up to 3 stories where the context is supportive; Setbacks sufficient for a degree of private open space on each lot, or aggregated into a neighborhood scale park; Interconnected street system
Density	Typically up to 8 du/acre; upon City Council approval allowed up to 12 du/acre: (1) where located within a Focus Area identified in Chapter 2; or (2) within one-half mile of a transit station shown in Map 7-1; or (3) where the existing adjacent residential land uses are greater than 8 du/acre. The analysis of compatibility for increased density shall include, but is not limited to the following factors: the presence of residential densities in the surrounding area greater than 8 du/acre, the presence of commercial or mixed-use areas, or access to parks, trails, and open space.



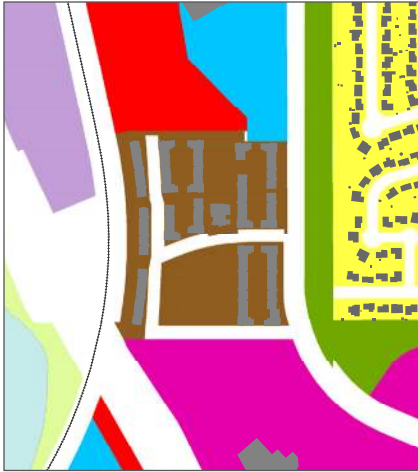
SUBURBAN MULTI-FAMILY

This character type accommodates a mix of moderate density housing types including townhomes and multifamily housing. Suburban Multi-Family shall be located along arterial streets, adjacent to transit, and within or near activity centers with a mix of supportive uses. Suburban Multi-Family may function as an edge treatment around Focus Areas to provide a transition to lower density development. Suburban Multi-Family shall be located in a manner to minimize routing of vehicular traffic through lower density residential areas.



Table 3-4. Suburban Multi-Family Development Standards

Land Use	Requirement
Primary Uses	Multifamily; Townhomes; Single Family Attached
Secondary Uses	Non-commercial Recreational Uses; Child Care Facilities; Congregate Care Facilities; Senior Housing
Development Characteristics	Requirement
Form and Guidelines	Buildings 1 to 3 stories but allowed higher along arterial streets or within Focus Areas; Access to community parks, trails and/open space; Engaged street orientation
Density	Maximum 18.0 du/acre
Minimum Lot Size	2.5 gross acres for multifamily uses



URBAN MULTI-FAMILY

This character type accommodates a range of higher density housing types from townhomes to apartments, condominiums and similar higher density typologies. Urban Multi-Family shall be located along arterial streets, adjacent to high capacity transit (commuter rail, express bus), and activity centers, where supportive neighborhood-serving uses and employment opportunities are available. Parking areas should primarily be contained in structured parking or located underneath housing. Urban Multi-Family shall be located in a manner to minimize routing of vehicular traffic through lower density residential areas.



Table 3-5. Urban Multi-Family Development Standards

Land Use	Requirement
Primary Uses	Multifamily; Townhomes; Senior Housing
Secondary Uses	Non-commercial Recreational Uses; Child Care Facilities; Congregate Care Facilities
Development Characteristics	Requirement
Form and Guidelines	Buildings 1 to 4 stories but allowed higher along arterial streets or within Focus Areas; Access to community parks, trails and/open space; Engaged street orientation; Structured or tuck-under parked
Density	Maximum 36.0 du/acre
Minimum Lot Size	5.0 gross acres for multifamily



MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD

This character type is intended for inclusive neighborhoods with a mix of residential and supportive non-residential uses in a walkable, pedestrian-oriented, urban village development pattern. Housing types range from medium and small-lot single family homes to multifamily housing. Mixed or non-residential uses shall be blended with residential development to include offices, personal/business services, retail and live/work development. An interconnected grid of streets, pedestrian connections and public parks is emphasized. Mixed-Use Neighborhoods incorporate high quality architecture and urban design elements such as enhanced streetscapes, parks and plaza spaces, and buildings featuring a street orientation. Single-family homes are expected to be in alley-loaded format wherever possible. The maximum density and intensity for this designation may be applied to an entire master planned development on contiguous parcels with the Mixed-Use Neighborhood designation as opposed to specific sites.

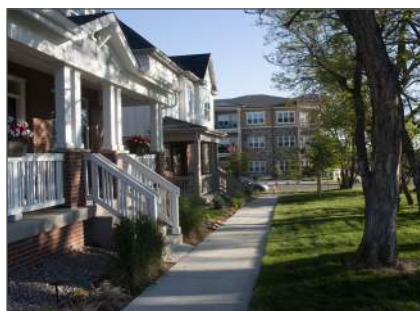
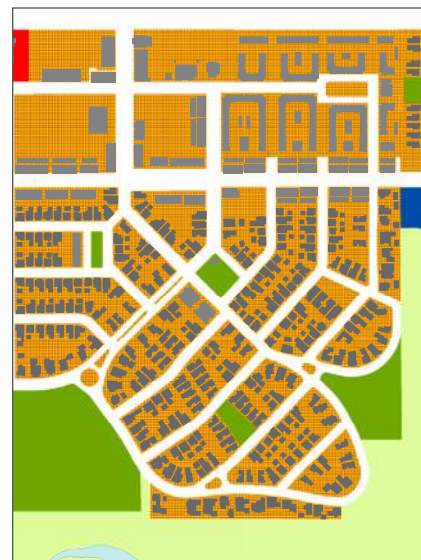


Table 3-6. Mixed-Use Neighborhood Development Standards

Land Use	Requirement
Primary Uses	Multifamily; Townhomes; Single Family; Offices; Personal Services; Retail Commercial; Live/Work
Secondary Uses	Non-commercial Recreational Uses; Senior Housing; Child care Facilities; Live Entertainment; Assembly Uses
Development Characteristics	Requirement
Form and Guidelines	<p>Predominantly 1 to 2 stories but up to 5 stories at key edge locations where higher density is compatible;</p> <p>Civic, park and recreation spaces located throughout the neighborhood;</p> <p>Limited use of boundary walls, and internal fencing is predominantly open;</p> <p>Engaged street orientation, including at entrances;</p> <p>Alley-loaded format where compatible with street network;</p> <p>Blocks feature a mix of housing types</p>
Density	Maximum 18.0 du/acre ¹

¹ Greater densities may be allowed if authorized by City Council



MIXED-USE ACTIVITY CENTER

This character type establishes future activity centers in the city with access to transit and amenities. Uses may include a mix of residential, retail, office and hotel uses. Along pedestrian-oriented street frontages, ground floor uses should be active, such as retail stores, restaurants and cafes. A vertical mix of uses is encouraged with retail at the ground level and office, hotel and/or residential on upper floors. Parking is typically structured or below grade, with minimal surface parking and which should be located away from public view. Auto-oriented uses and new standalone uses with drive-throughs are not permitted. It is recognized that where this designation has been applied to previously developed areas, that redevelopment to meet the 2040 Comprehensive Plan policies may be an incremental process, and flexibility is necessary to allow consideration for sites when a Specific Plan is not in place.



Table 3-7. Mixed-Use Activity Center Development Standards

Land Use	Requirement
Primary Uses ¹	Multifamily; Townhomes; Offices; Personal Services; Retail Commercial; Live/Work; Eating Establishments; Hotels
Secondary Uses	Senior Housing; Medical Facilities; Child Care Facilities; Microbreweries; Live Entertainment
Development Characteristics	Requirement
Form and Guidelines	Buildings 1 to 4 stories where abutting lower density residential, but allowed higher along arterial streets, adjacent to major transit centers, or within Focus Areas; Parking at rear, below grade or in structures; Direct linkages between residential and commercial uses; Engaged street orientation
Floor Area Ratio	Minimum 0.75 FAR Residential and Commercial; Maximum 2.5 FAR Residential and Commercial ²

¹ Auto-oriented uses and stand-alone uses with vehicle drive-throughs are prohibited, however, formerly established drive-through uses may be permitted within a larger new development, subject to the development review process.

² Greater maximum FAR may be permitted if otherwise determined by Preliminary Development Plan (PDP) or Specific Plan.



COMMERCIAL

This character type serves a variety of neighborhood and regional commercial needs and can be comprised of retail stores, eating establishments, banks, supermarkets and business and professional offices. This character type is primarily intended for retail commercial uses, however, two sub-types of Commercial exist: Service Commercial and Commercial Mixed-use, which are further described below. This section describes the predominant Commercial character type.

Retail uses shall be located within walking distances of residential neighborhoods or in areas where retail uses are already established. Smaller-scale neighborhood commercial development is allowed on collector streets.

Auto service stations, convenience stores, drive-through facilities, and other similar uses may be permitted when incorporated into a larger commercial development but may be limited in quantity and scale and may be prohibited in locations that directly abut residential uses, public/quasi-public or institutional uses, or parks and open spaces if their impacts cannot be sufficiently mitigated. Where allowed, such facilities shall use contextual architectural design and be compatible with surrounding uses. Additionally, the site design shall orient outdoor activities such as gas pumps, outdoor menu boards and speakers, and vacuums away from residences. Such uses shall incorporate necessary provisions on-site for changing vehicle technologies.



Table 3-8. Commercial Development Standards

Land Use	Requirement
Primary Uses	Retail stores; Eating Establishments; Banks; Supermarkets; Business and Professional Offices
Secondary Uses	Auto-oriented uses; stand-alone uses with vehicle drive-throughs; Hotels; Child Care Facilities; Microbrewery; Live Entertainment; Medical Facilities
Development Characteristics	Requirement
Form and Guidelines	Buildings 1 to 3 stories depending on context, however, certain limited uses may allow greater height; Parking preferred at rear, though some parking in front is typical; Lot coverage < 60%; Direct linkages between residential and commercial uses; Employee and customer amenity spaces
Floor Area Ratio	Maximum 0.45 FAR



SERVICE COMMERCIAL SUB-TYPE

Locations identified for Service Commercial on the Land Use Diagram, allow the Commercial character type uses but also accommodate stand-alone auto-oriented and general commercial uses including auto sales and service, self-storage, nurseries, and wholesale establishments with a lesser degree of limitations as compared to the Commercial character type. Development is generally limited to arterial streets away from major intersections or gateway locations.



Table 3-9. Service Commercial Development Standards

Land Use	Requirement
Primary Uses	Auto-related sales and services; Convenience Stores; Wholesale; Nurseries; Retail Stores; Eating Establishments; Banks
Secondary Uses	Rental car facilities; Automotive paint/body repair facilities; Self-storage; Child Care Facilities; Live Entertainment
Development Characteristics	Requirement
Form and Guidelines	Buildings 1 to 2 stories, however, certain limited uses may allow greater height; Loading, service or storage areas screened from view; Employee and customer amenity spaces
Floor Area Ratio	Maximum 0.35 FAR



COMMERCIAL MIXED-USE SUB-TYPE

This is a commercial character type, however, the Land Use Diagram has designated locations where a commercial property may support the concepts of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan by adding residential uses to activate commercial areas and contribute to revitalization of commercial corridors. Stand-alone commercial use or a combination of residential with commercial use is permitted. Where residential development is proposed, a mix of uses is required to achieve the maximum allowed density with a minimum 0.10 FAR of commercial use (retail, offices or personal/business services). Vertical mixed-use is preferred; however, where not feasible, residential development may be horizontally integrated with commercial uses up to 24 units per acre. Parking should be located behind buildings, below grade or in structures to ensure active uses face onto public streets. New auto-oriented uses and drive-throughs are not permitted when a mixed-use project includes residential uses. It is recognized where this designation has been applied to previously developed areas, that redevelopment to meet the 2040 Comprehensive Plan policies may be an incremental process, and design flexibility is necessary to allow consideration for sites when a Specific Plan is not in place.

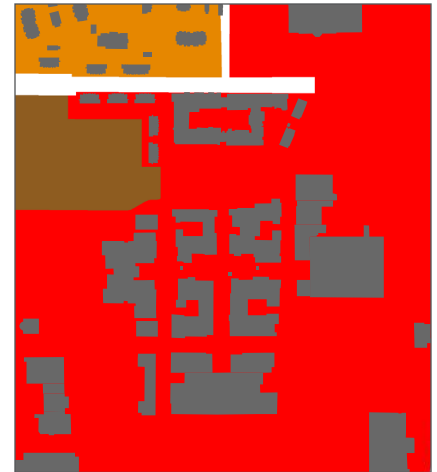


Table 3-10. Commercial Mixed-Use Development Standards

Land Use	Requirement
Primary Uses	Multifamily; Townhomes; Single Family Attached; Offices; Personal Services; Retail Commercial; Live/Work; Eating Establishments
Secondary Uses	Hotel; Senior Housing; Medical Facilities; Auto-oriented Uses; ¹ Stand-alone uses with drive-throughs; Child Care Facilities; Microbreweries; Live Entertainment
Development Characteristics	Requirement
Form and Guidelines	Buildings 1 to 3 story depending on context where abutting lower density residential but allowed higher along arterial or collector roads or in Focus Areas; Parking at rear, below grade or in structures; Direct linkages between residential and commercial uses; Engaged street orientation; Employee and customer amenity spaces
Density	Maximum 24.0 du/acre (horizontal mixed-use); 36.0 du/acre (vertical mixed-use)
Floor Area Ratio	Minimum 0.10 FAR Commercial with Residential Maximum 2.0 FAR

¹ New auto-oriented uses are not permitted as part of a mixed-use project that includes residential uses.



NEIGHBORHOOD OFFICE

Maximum FAR of 0.35

This character type accommodates offices for medical, legal, banking, insurance and similar professional office uses. This designation is intended to be compatible with abutting residential and other sensitive uses. A limited amount of retail uses integrated into the office building is permitted as a portion of the project gross floor area, or GFA. Overnight stays are not permitted in the neighborhood office category.



Table 3-11. Neighborhood Office Development Standards

Land Use	Requirement
Primary Uses	Professional and commercial offices (medical, business, real estate, law, and consulting offices)
Secondary Uses ¹	Support commercial (eating establishments; pharmacies, personal and business services); Office Supply; Medical Facilities
Development Characteristics	Requirement
Form and Guidelines	Buildings 1 to 3 story however certain primary uses may be allowed greater height; Lot coverage < 60%; Maximum 15% of GFA support commercial uses or 10,000 square feet, whichever is less; Employee and customer amenity spaces
Floor Area Ratio	Maximum 0.35 FAR

¹May be allowed through the city's development review process when developed in conjunction with, and accessory to, office buildings.



EMPLOYMENT - FLEX

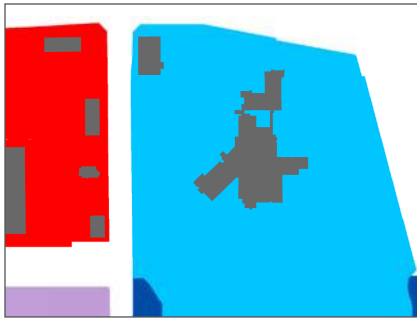
This character type is intended to provide and protect land for flexible employment uses including offices, research and development facilities, and supportive uses. In general, office uses predominate this category, but light industrial uses may be allowed when located away from residential areas and adequately buffered from sensitive land uses, as shown in Map 3-3. Manufacturing and assembly space is permitted when inclusive of storefront/showroom space for offices, sales or customer service. Uses that create objectionable levels of noise, vibration, odor, glare or hazards are not permitted. Outdoor storage must be screened from public right-of-way and non-industrial uses. Strategically located hotel uses that support employment uses may be permitted through a master planned development. Support commercial uses integrated into employment buildings are permitted up to 10% of gross floor area. The city may impose stricter design standards for more intense industrial uses.



Table 3-12. Employment-Flex Development Standards

Land Use	Requirement
Primary Uses	Professional offices; Research and development labs; Flex office space (professional office, research and development labs); Incubator space; Hotels
Secondary Uses	Manufacturing; Warehousing; Fabrication; Repair shops; Wholesale distributors; Production; Medical facilities; Overnight stays; Support Commercial ¹ including eating establishments, pharmacies, personal business services, office supply
Development Characteristics	Requirement
Form and Guidelines	Buildings 1 to 4 stories but may be allowed higher in Focus or Transition Areas or where adjacent to expressways; Lot coverage < 60% but greater for certain secondary uses; Employee and customer amenity spaces; Loading, service or storage areas screened from view; Architectural detailing for elevations within public view
Floor Area Ratio	Maximum 1.0 FAR (primary uses) Maximum 0.5 FAR (standalone secondary uses)

¹ Max 10% of GFA for support commercial or 15,000 SF, whichever is less



EMPLOYMENT - OFFICE/ INSTITUTIONAL CAMPUS

This character type identifies areas where higher-intensity destination employment and institutional uses are appropriate. These areas are located along major transportation corridors with high visibility and accessibility. Employment uses are emphasized, including high-rise or campus-like office developments, medical centers, and supportive research and development uses. Accessory or small-scale supporting retail or personal/business service uses integrated into office buildings are permitted up to 10% of gross floor area. Hotel uses that support employment uses may be permitted through a master planned development. Strategically located assisted living/long term care facilities, skilled nursing/rehabilitation centers may be permitted through a master planned development where a full-service community hospital is established, subject to resource and infrastructure availability. Overnight stays may be limited in consideration of the composition of the employment area and sensitivity of adjacent uses. The desired type of development is multistory buildings served by a mix of structured and surface parking.



Table 3-13. Employment - Office/Institutional Campus Development Standards

Land Use	Requirement
Primary Uses	Professional offices; Research and development labs; Hospitals; Medical clinics; Medical laboratories
Secondary Uses	Hotel; Manufacturing ¹ ; Warehouse ¹ ; Production ¹ ; Support Commercial ² including eating establishments, pharmacies, personal business services, office supply; Overnight stays; Rehabilitation Facilities; Hospice; Long-term nursing/care facilities (up to 18 du/acre)
Development Characteristics	Requirement
Form and Guidelines	Buildings 2 to 6 stories but may be allowed higher in Focus Areas or adjacent to expressways; Buildings arranged to create a walkable environment; High lot coverage due to large building scale; Limited surface parking; Employee and customer amenity spaces; Loading, service or storage areas screened from view; All-sided architecture
Floor Area Ratio	Minimum 0.3 FAR Maximum 2.0 FAR

¹ Max 10% of GFA for mfr, warehouse, and/or production uses unless otherwise authorized by City Council

²Max 10% of GFA for support commercial or 15,000 SF whichever is less



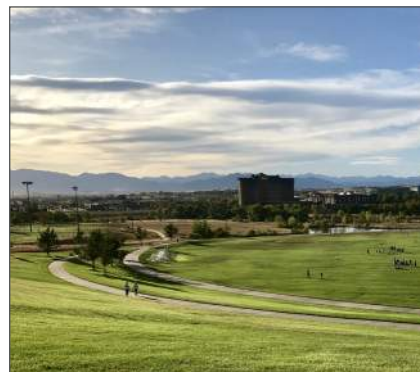
OPEN SPACE/MAJOR CREEK CORRIDOR

This character type identifies publicly-owned and managed areas preserved for passive recreational use and protection of natural habitat. Passive public use includes hiking, biking, nature study, and photography. Open spaces may include scenic vistas, floodplains, trail corridors, farmlands and highly visible natural areas. These lands are preserved and managed in a natural condition. Major Creek Corridors are locations within the 100-year floodplain located on private land. Flood corridor areas remain undeveloped to protect property from flood damage, and to preserve the riparian habitat and wildlife associated with the area.



PARKS/GOLF COURSES

This character type applies to public or private parks, golf courses or greenbelts. These lands serve both active and passive recreation needs of the community with play areas, fields, trails and natural features, and amenities.



PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC

This character type is intended for uses related to general community services, such as public safety facilities, schools and institutions of higher learning, child care facilities, places of worship, community centers, hospitals, municipal facilities, and cemeteries. Future public and quasi-public uses such as private schools, places of worship and recreation facilities, although not shown specifically on the Land Use Diagram, are generally allowed in residential character types subject to city review and approval.



AGRICULTURE/CONSERVATION AREA

This character type is identified only in locations outside of municipal boundaries to inform consideration of future annexation requests. These areas provide for preservation of crop agriculture, ranching and related agri-business practices. Where residential uses are permitted, densities should be sufficiently low to allow continuation of agricultural uses. Limited commercial uses directly serving agricultural uses such as farmers markets, feed stores, nurseries, and agri-tourism facilities may be permitted.



3.5 GOALS & POLICIES

RELEVANT PLANS

The following plans are incorporated by reference and are not repeated in detail:

- Transportation & Mobility Plan
- Sustainability Plan

The following goals and policies provide direction for all aspects of physical planning. Goals are defined as desired ideals and a value to be sought. Policies articulate a course of action that guides governmental decision making to meet the goal. To further define how policies can be implemented in the short- and long-term, specific strategies can be found in the Implementation Action Plan. They are not inclusive of all actions and options.

BALANCED LAND USES



CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS



Education



Equity - Diversity and Inclusion



Health



Resilience



Safety



Climate

Goal LU-1 Achieve a balance of uses in the city, including employment, residential, cultural, destination attractions and retail, as well as a full range of amenities necessary to support a vibrant and resilient community.

- 1.1 Ensure land uses and zoning districts are consistent with the Land Use Diagram in Map 3-3 and land use character types in Section 3.4.
- 1.2 Evaluate the impact of new development to the city's future water supply and infrastructure system, considering land use, intensity, and proposed conservation measures.

Goal LU-2 Support a broad range of employment, service, and office land uses to strengthen the city's economic base and opportunities for economic growth.

- 2.1 Continue to diversify commercial, light industrial, and institutional uses in the city to insulate the city's fiscal base from downturns in individual markets.
- 2.2 Promote the development of employment uses in areas with convenient access to commercial and business services, employee housing opportunities, transit and mixed-use-activity centers with an emphasis on Focus Areas and employment-oriented Transition Areas.
- 2.3 Provide opportunities for greater use of flex employment spaces through appropriately mapped land use character types.
- 2.4 Support options for home-based work activities including accessory dwelling units and live/work units.



Goal LU-3 Foster a sustainable mix of commercial and institutional uses to meet the varied needs of Westminster's residents and businesses.

- 3.1 Establish and support community and neighborhood activity centers that provide access to commercial and professional services, dining and shopping options, and an identifiable center (public space, intensification or focus of activity within a defined area).
- 3.2 Attract experiential retail uses to the city that draw additional businesses, development investment, employers, and visitors.
- 3.3 Support the Neighborhood Unit concept through characteristics of a 20-minute neighborhood, where residents have access to retail services, schools, and other services within 20-minutes walking or biking distance from residences.

20-MINUTE NEIGHBORHOOD

20-minute neighborhoods are places where residents have easy, convenient access to many of the places and services they use daily including grocery stores, restaurants, schools and parks. They are characterized by an accessible mix of commercial, recreational, civic and residential uses that are generally within a one-mile walking distance.

FOCUS AREAS AND ACTIVITY CENTERS



Goal LU-4 Create and foster unique districts and visually cohesive employment and activity areas throughout the city.

- 4.1 Ensure that commercial and business centers have a distinct identity and character, and are generally compatible in use and design through cohesive site planning, landscaping, and architectural design.
- 4.2 Encourage local, unique shopping and dining options, particularly in Focus and Transition Areas and smaller, mixed-use neighborhood centers like those in Bradburn Village.
- 4.3 Encourage the establishment and intensification of activity centers that provide a mix of uses, transit, and attractive, walkable environments.

Goal LU-5 Cultivate higher density residential development in the Focus Areas to establish activity centers that create a sense of place and concentrated nodes to support transit per the Transportation and Mobility Plan.

- 5.1 Integrate a range of housing types, supportive commercial uses, and ample public amenities and spaces into neighborhood units.
- 5.2 Encourage a vertical mix of uses, with residential and/or office uses above ground floor retail/commercial uses in the heart of activity centers. Providing an active frontage along major pedestrian connections and corridors should be a priority.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN



Goal LU-6 Encourage sustainable design practices and construction in all aspects of physical planning in the city, with a focus on site, landscape, and building design. (Also see conservation and sustainability goals in Ch. 8: Utilities and Resources)

- 6.1 Promote development that is walkable, accessible to transit, and supportive of the locational concepts of LEED-ND (Neighborhood Development) through the Neighborhood Unit concept and 20-minutes communities.
- 6.2 Encourage a resilient, equitable, and reliable energy future powered by renewable energy as described in the Westminster Sustainability Plan.
- 6.3 Perpetuate the legacy of Westminster's natural resources by conserving and maintaining thriving natural systems and enhancing city infrastructure.
- 6.4 Integrate and implement sustainable design principles throughout the Westminster Municipal Code, Sustainability Plan, and future planning efforts to include waste management, building safety, energy efficiency, universal design, and access for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- 6.5 Encourage green building practices to the extent practicable and financially feasible, including elements such as green infrastructure, energy efficiency, solar access, and construction techniques to ensure resistance to moisture, wind, and fire damage.

Goal LU-7 Develop a built environment that is integrated with open spaces and allows for the preservation of natural areas and creek corridors.

- 7.1 Pursue development patterns that can preserve open space lands and natural areas.
- 7.2 Limit impact to water quality and natural habitat through land acquisition, watershed protection and annexations adjacent to Standley Lake.
- 7.3 Integrate the parks, open space, and trails network into new development, infill, and redevelopment areas to encourage walkable neighborhoods with access to parks and trails.



DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS



Goal LU-8 Support a consistent and predictable development process with a high level of clarity in standards, combined with innovative development practices.

- 8.1 Maintain land development regulations and processes that result in quality development and address needs and concerns of the community.
- 8.2 Consider alternatives to Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) to increase transparency for all community members.
- 8.3 Incorporate concern for long-term costs of maintenance for owners and/or tenants in the development of new standards relative to sustainability, resiliency, and energy.

Goal LU-9 Maintain the city's high-quality design and development character.

- 9.1 Promote excellence in site planning, architecture, and the design of landscaping, lighting and signage in all developments by means of design standards for each type of use.
- 9.2 Use development standards and guidelines to promote development of neighborhood units with access to amenities and services, and ensure high quality of design.
- 9.3 Encourage development that maintains the enhanced public realm and architectural character of the community while considering limited natural resources and issues of diversity, equity, and inclusivity.
- 9.4 Provide pedestrian-oriented and accessible amenities and design in new development, such as outdoor seating, plazas, public art, ground-floor retail, shade facilities, and enhanced transit shelters and amenities.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION




Goal LU-10 Coordinate planning efforts with surrounding communities, counties, regional agencies, and special districts to support regional needs.

- 10.1 Ensure new development and land uses are consistent with applicable area and regional plans and regulations.
- 10.2 Work with Jefferson County to ensure existing development and proposed development is compatible with Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport operations.
- 10.3 Continue to work with partnering communities in the Denver Regional Council of Governments Mile High Compact to plan for the long-term growth vision established by the Metro Vision 2040.
- 10.4 Consider strategic annexations on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration alignment with city objectives, fiscal impacts, viability of municipal services within accepted standards, availability of infrastructure and utilities to serve the area, connectivity between new developments, economic diversity, and compatibility of land uses with contiguous development. See Appendix D Annexation Analysis.
- 10.5 Actively participate in regional efforts to address issues of housing affordability and homelessness through initiatives that integrate land use and transportation planning, as well as access to employment, education, and health services in a comprehensive manner.
- 10.6 Work with Adams County and/or Hyland Hills Parks and Recreation District to identify potential park and recreation sites for unincorporated areas south of 92nd Avenue.



4.0

TRANSPORTATION, MOBILITY, AND CONNECTIONS



This chapter provides an overview of Westminster's transportation network including services and infrastructure, with a more detailed evaluation of the current and future conditions of Westminster's transportation network included in the Transportation & Mobility Plan (TMP). Current conditions presented in this chapter establish a baseline for the TMP analysis and recommendations and is based on available data from various resources and prior to events related to COVID-19—data sources and dates are noted throughout the chapter. This chapter also includes transportation-supportive goals and policies relevant to the Comprehensive Plan; additional goals policies, and strategies are established in related plans including the TMP, Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan, and Sustainability Plan. The most current transportation-related data, goals and actions included in the Comprehensive Plan will be reflected in the TMP, superseding those listed in the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan will be updated periodically to reflect the current TMP.



OVERVIEW

The quality and experience of how people travel within and in and out of the city is one of the most significant factors in planning for the future and associated transportation and mobility needs. Streets play multiple roles—as major thoroughfares that handle significant motor vehicle travel through the city, as bicycle routes for commuters to employment or transit routes, or as recreation facilities for pedestrians or bicyclists. Land use patterns throughout the Denver Metro Region have largely resulted in car-dependent communities, but recent and long-term investments in transit and multimodal infrastructure indicate that land use patterns, demographics, and travel preferences are changing.

Transportation improvement revenue sources such as the gas tax rate have not increased in over 25 years. This challenges all levels of government to maintain existing infrastructure assets in a safe condition, and slows the expansion of the multimodal system, resulting in the inability to meet the mobility needs of the region. Cities in the Denver-metro area, including Westminster, focus on improving the multimodal transportation network, to ensure people can travel within Westminster and access regional transportation corridors, activity centers, and employment centers easily by car, transit, biking, walking, or rolling.

4.1 TRANSPORTATION TRENDS

TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

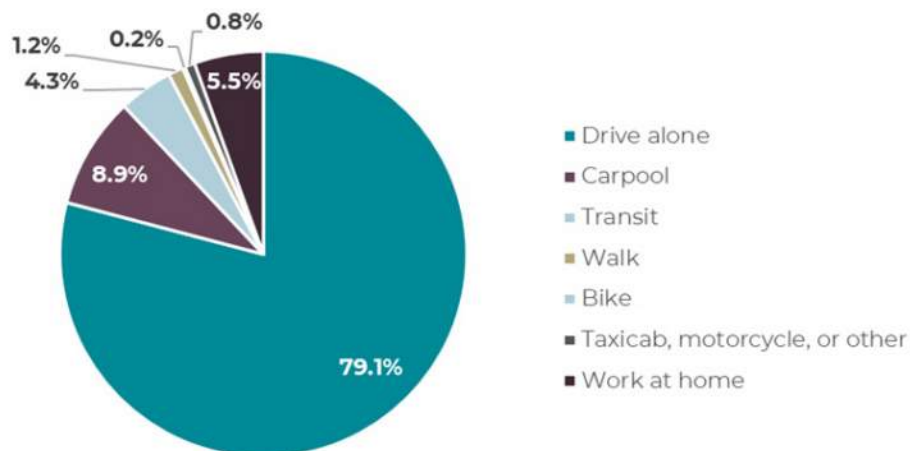
On a typical workday, approximately 79% of Westminster residents who work drive alone to their employment; 9% carpool and 4% take transit. Approximately 1% walk, less than 1% bike, and 6% work from home, as shown in Figure 1. As illustrated in Figure 2, nearly 38,000 residents of other communities in the Metro Region commute into Westminster for employment, while nearly 50,000 Westminster residents leave for employment in other communities such as Boulder and Downtown Denver. Over 5,900 people both live and work in Westminster. In addition to the inflow and outflow of Westminster residents and employees, there are also many commuters who travel through Westminster everyday along many of Westminster's major corridors.

ZERO-VEHICLE HOUSEHOLDS

In 2017, approximately 2% of Westminster residents did not have access to a vehicle. These households either cannot afford a vehicle, choose to not have a vehicle, or have a disability preventing them from driving a vehicle. These residents rely on others to carpool or depend on other modes of transportation for daily trips and errands.



Figure 4-1. Westminster Resident Commute to Work Trips



Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 4-2. Daily Population Change in Westminster



Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017 5-Year Estimates, Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program



TRAVEL TIME

As correlated with population and employment growth, traffic and congestion continue to increase in the Denver Metro Region, including in Westminster. Average travel times to work increased from 25.4 to 27.1 minutes between 2010 and 2017, a 7% percent increase.

4.2 WESTMINSTER'S STREET NETWORK

Streets generally provide two important functions: access and mobility. Street are generally designed for existing or planned land uses, to provide a level of continuity, transportation modes served, and proximity and connections to other facilities. Westminster's streets are classified as local, collector, minor arterial, major arterial, and highway. The street network in Westminster has been historically designed to prioritize the efficient movement of the number of vehicles, not the number of people. See Figure 4-3 on following page. To evaluate the existing and future street conditions and operations, current and forecasted traffic counts and volumes as well as crash data along Westminster's streets are further evaluated in the TMP.

4.3 BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY & SAFETY

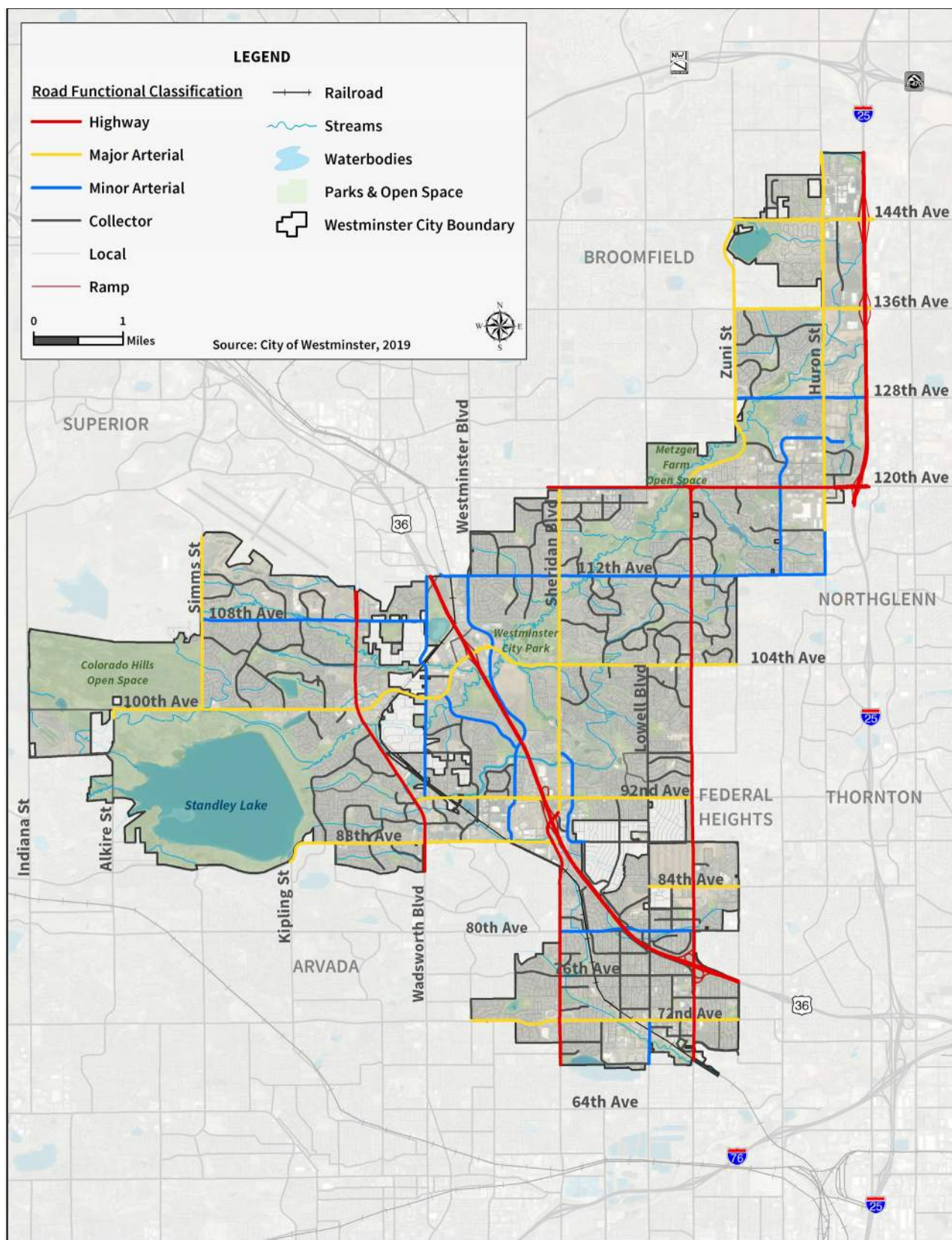
As Westminster's population increases and growth continues, provision of safe, accessible, and connected transportation options including biking and walking are increasingly more important, particularly to connect to transit stations, employment, education, services, recreational amenities, and local neighborhood centers. Westminster's bicycle and pedestrian networks are part of the overall structure of the city and the region, which includes a significant network of shared-use bicycle and pedestrian trail facilities integrated into parks, open space, and urban development.

WALK, BIKE, AND TRANSIT SCORES

A nationally-used metric called Walk Score® is used to measure how easy it is to get around a community by walking. Communities are scored from 0 to 100; the higher the score, the easier it is to get around a community on foot. While these scores give some indication of the ease of travel on foot based on proximity to amenities and destinations such as businesses, parks, theaters, and schools, the score does not consider level of comfort and overall experience of the user such as sidewalk connections and



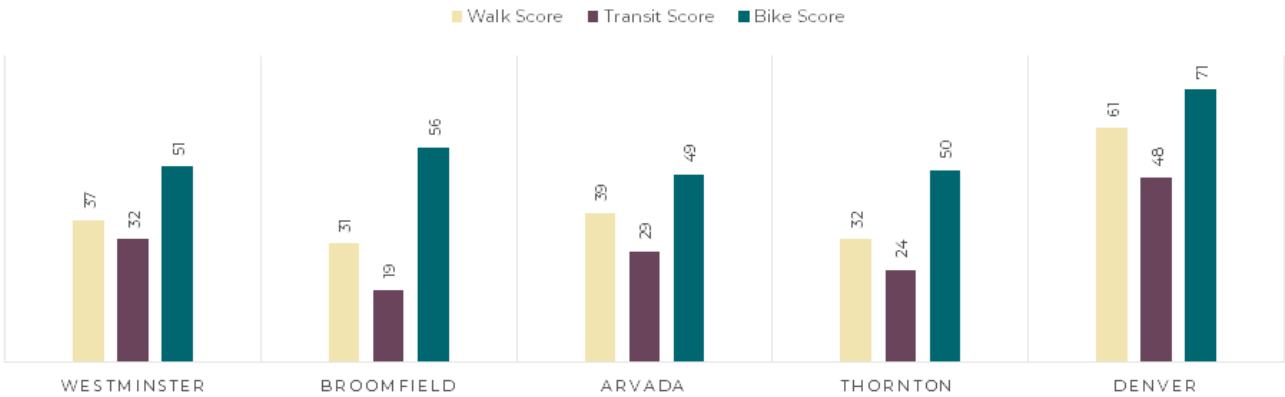
Figure 4-3. Existing Street Functional Classification



Lane counts and street cross sections will be found in the Transportation & Mobility Plan.

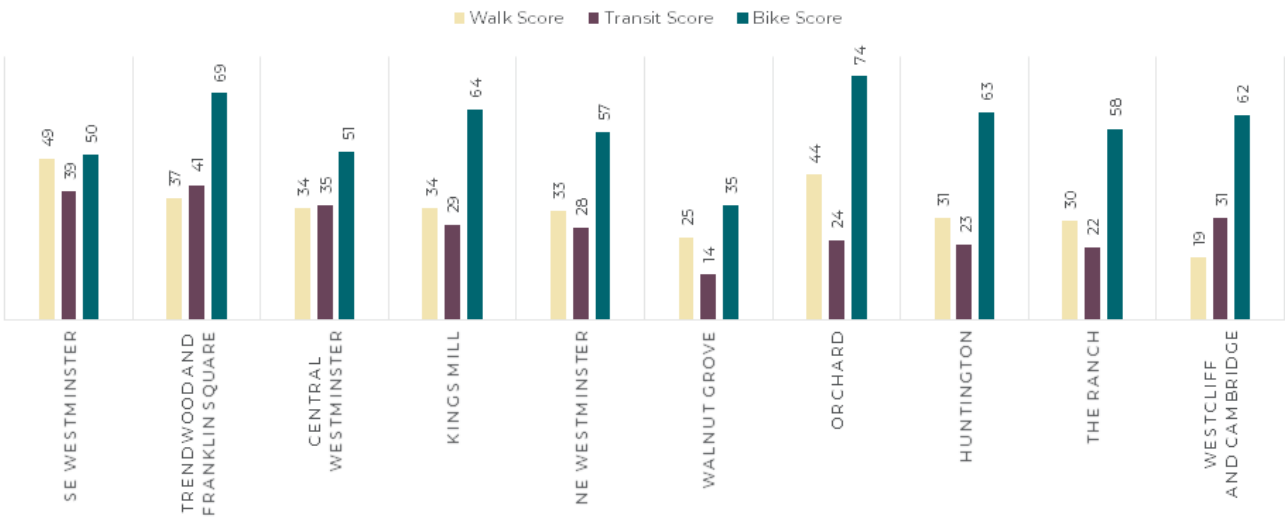
street type. Similarly, the Bike Score and Transit Score indicate the ease a traveler can bike around a community or take transit. Westminster has a Walk Score of 37, a Bike Score of 51 and a Transit Score of 32. Figure 3 and Figure 4 show Westminster’s walkability, bikeability, and transit access scores relative to other local municipalities and for the neighborhoods within Westminster. Data is available via the Walkscore.com website. Westminster’s scores are about equal or exceed neighboring communities except for Denver.

Figure 4-4. Walk, Transit, and Bike Scores in Adjacent Municipalities



Source: <https://www.walkscore.com/> October 2019

Figure 4-5. Walk, Transit, and Bike Scores in Westminster Neighborhoods



Source: <https://www.walkscore.com/> October 2019



SIDEWALKS

Approximately 92% of collector and arterial streets in Westminster have sidewalks. While sidewalks exist along the majority of streets, many do not meet current standards (e.g., missing accessible curb ramps at street crossings or narrow widths) and vary in condition. As new development occurs, safe and accessible pedestrian connections including sidewalks and crosswalks will be emphasized in areas with access to transit, parks or open space facilities, neighborhood services, and major activity centers. Improvements to existing facilities will be pursued as funding is available and development occurs.

ON-STREET BICYCLE FACILITIES

Westminster has implemented and continues to expand a network of on-street bicycle facilities throughout the city, including those identified in the TMP and the former 2030 Westminster Bicycle Master Plan. Today, Westminster's bicycle network includes approximately 40 miles of on-street bicycle facilities (bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, and shared lanes).

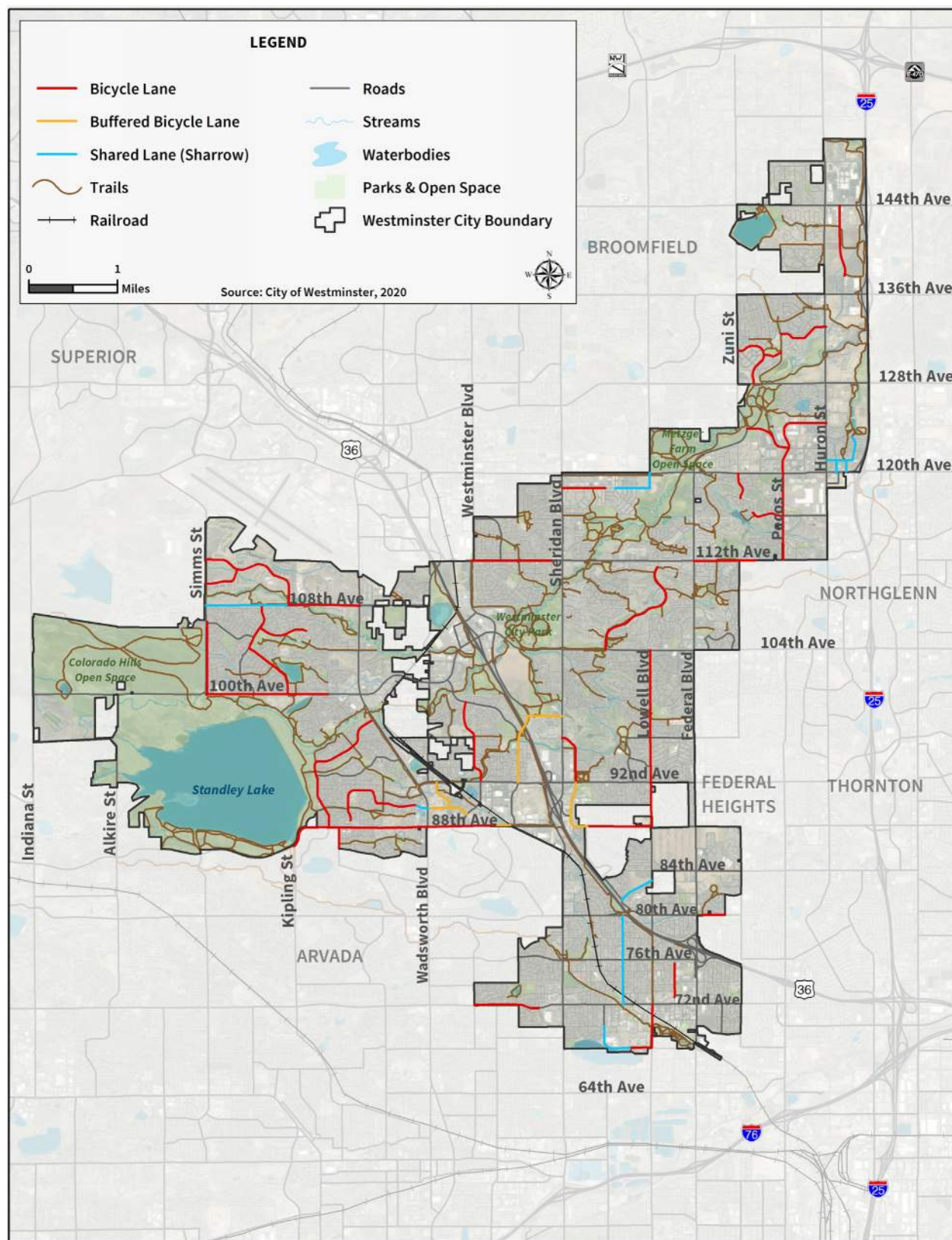
To attract bicycle riders of a wide range of ages and abilities, a bicycle network needs to include low-stress, high-comfort facilities that limits the interaction with motor vehicles on streets. Many of Westminster's collector streets are comfortable for bicycling today, but where lower-stress facilities are intersected by a grid of arterials with high speeds and/or volumes, the comfort of bicycling conditions decrease without the presence of separated facilities. Many streets in Westminster present opportunities for bolstering the low-stress network with a focus on intersection improvements to enhance connectivity.

TRAIL NETWORK

Westminster's transportation network includes an extensive trail system comprised of shared use trails both on and off-street that are used for both passive and active recreation use, as well as for commuting to employment areas. Within Westminster, 50 individual trails connect 150 miles of multi use trails. Within the trail system, five regional trails have been established along ditches and canals preserved as wildlife corridors. Connectivity along the pedestrian and bicycle network is facilitated by 40 underpasses that reduce the need to cross major arterial roadways at grade. In some locations, wide sidewalks and landscaped areas provide space between trail users and vehicular traffic. Over the past 20 years, the city has made infrastructure investments and put requirements in place to create a safe, pleasant environment for trail users. With new development, the Trail Master Plan component of the Open Space Stewardship Plan is consulted to ensure connectivity to existing and planned trails. More details about the trail network are available on the city website, in the Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan and the Open Space Stewardship Plan.



Figure 4-6. Existing On-Street Bike Routes and Trails



Lane counts and street cross sections will be found in the Transportation & Mobility Plan.



4.4 TRANSIT

The Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD) provides bus and rail transit service in the eight-county Denver Metro Region, including Westminster. In addition to the existing local service, several major regional transit improvements have been implemented in Westminster over the past five years including the Flatiron Flyer Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and B-Line Commuter Rail. With local bus service, Westminster is connected internally, to major destinations and other communities in the Denver Metro Region.

BUS SERVICE

Transit service along streets and major highways in Westminster is provided by RTD. RTD runs 21 bus routes serving many neighborhoods and four Park-n-Rides in Westminster. There are over 300 bus stops in Westminster with different types of passenger amenities including shelters, benches, and garbage receptacles. Bus service in Westminster includes both express routes (along US 36 and I-25) and local and regional routes. Many of the regional routes connect Westminster with Denver and Boulder and other surrounding communities.

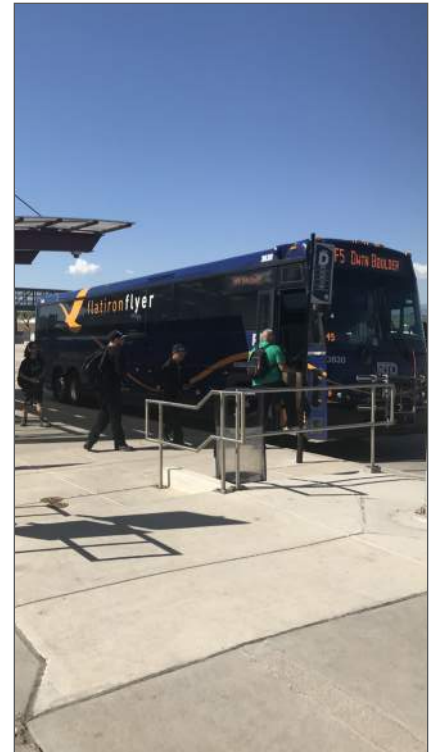
The Flatiron Flyer, a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service, opened in 2016 providing service between Denver, Westminster, Broomfield, Louisville, Superior, and Boulder along US 36. Two Flatiron Flyer stations serve Westminster: US 36 & Church Ranch, and US 36 & Sheridan. The Flatiron Flyer became one of the strongest routes in the RTD system, with steady ridership growth from its start of service in 2016. The COVID-19 pandemic changed bus travel patterns and the delivery of service dramatically. RTD is gradually returning service to pre-pandemic levels and continues to monitor ridership.

FLEXRIDE

RTD also provides FlexRide services in the Westmoor area and between 144th Avenue and the Wagon Road Park-n-Ride. This service is open to the general public and provides reservation-based shared ride curb to curb bus service between transit stations, Park-n-Rides, and destinations such as shopping centers, businesses, and schools.

ACCESS-A-RIDE AND HUMAN SERVICES

In addition to the local and regional bus service, RTD provides Access-a-Ride services for people with disabilities. Programs in Jefferson and Adams Counties also provide transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities for trips such as to medical appointments or grocery shopping.



Flatiron Flyer Bus



Bus Shelter and Bench at Bus Stop



Passengers Boarding a RTD B-line Train at Westminster Station

COMMUTER RAIL

The B-Line commuter rail line transports riders between Westminster Station to Union Station in Denver, providing access to major employers, services, and other key destinations. At Union Station, the B-Line connects to C, E, G and W rail lines, the A-Line to the Denver International Airport, as well as local and regional bus routes. The B-Line provides a reliable and competitive travel of less than 15 minutes between Westminster and Denver.

Transit Facilities and Passenger Amenities

Westminster Station is an important regional mobility and economic development hub. Westminster Station is located in Historic Westminster and offers over 600 parking spaces, 20 bike lockers, and electric vehicle charging stations. The city continues to work collaboratively with RTD to complete the B-Line as proposed in the 2004 RTD FasTracks Plan, following the alignment of the BNSF Rail tracks to Broomfield, Boulder, and Longmont. Stations are planned for Downtown Westminster and near the Walnut Creek retail center. Station access and multimodal connections are provided in conjunction with new development.

In addition to Westminster Station, Table 4-1 identifies the amenities at the US 36 & Church Ranch Station, US 36 & Sheridan Station, and Wagon Road Park-n-Ride.

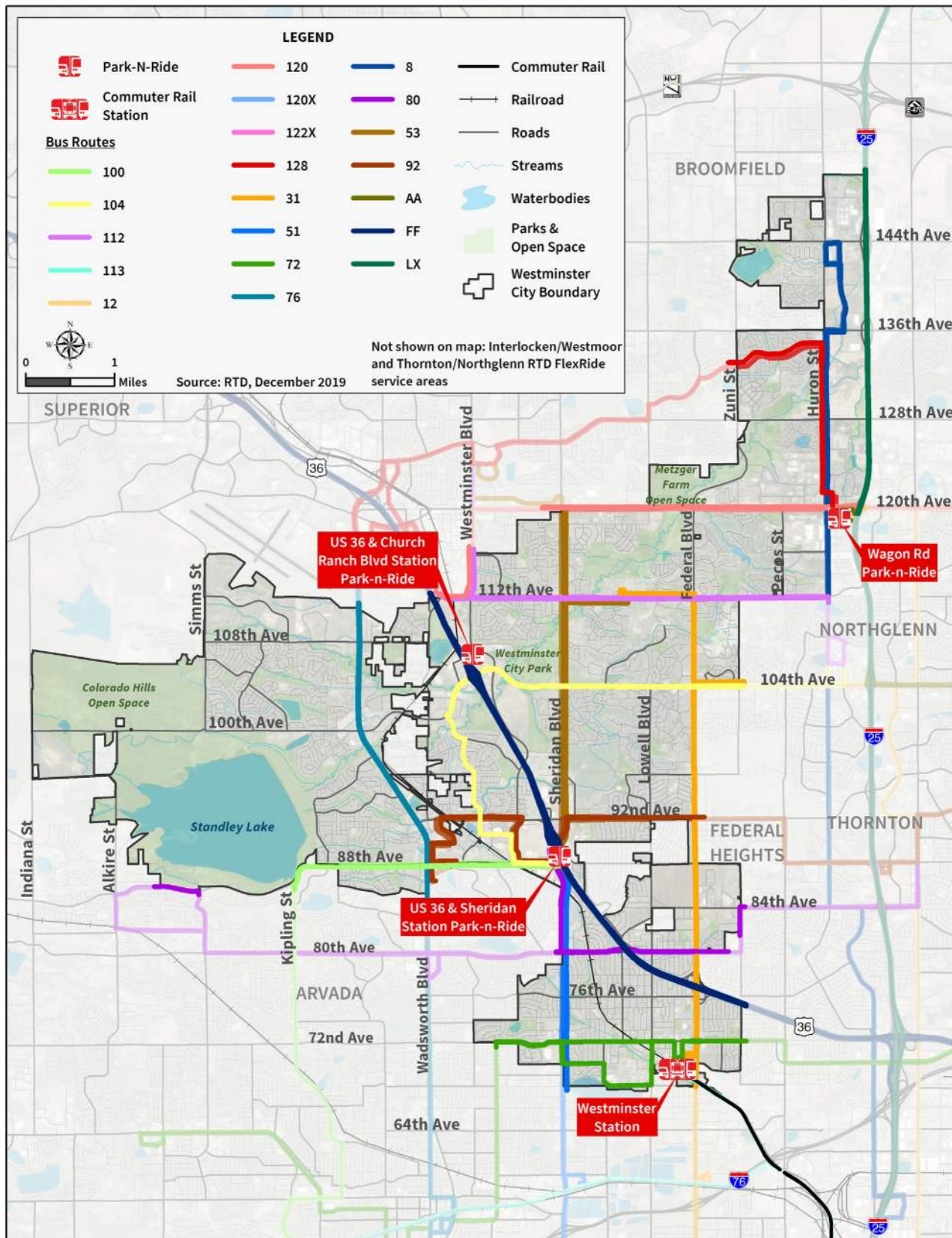
Table 4-1. Transit Amenities at Stations and Park-n-Rides in Westminster

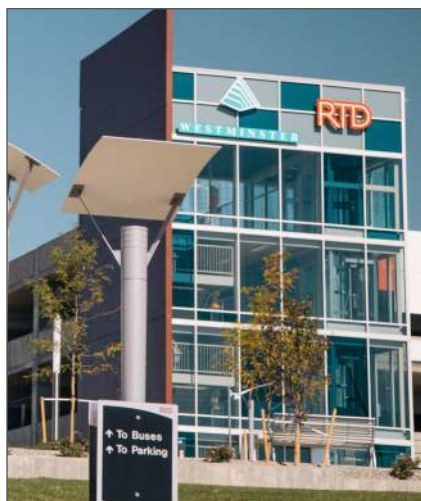
Amenities	US 36 & Church Ranch Blvd.	US 36 & Sheridan Station	Westminster Station	Wagon Road Park-n-Ride
Parking Spaces	396	1,310	600	1,540
Parking Utilization	21%	76%	77%	95%
Bike Racks	6	31	18	10
Bike Lockers	6	21	–	20

Source: RTD, <https://www.rtd-denver.com/app/facilities>, April 2020



Figure 4-7. RTD Bus and Rail Service

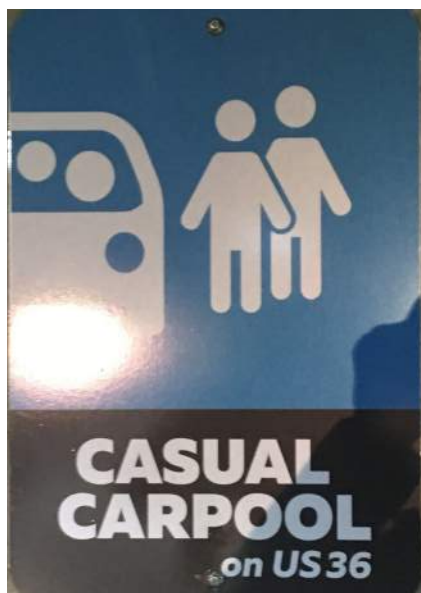




Westminster Station Parking

4.5 PARKING

Different parking options are available throughout Westminster including on-street parking and private and public off-street parking (garages and open lots). The city manages 600 on-street parking spaces and over 1,900 off-street spaces including the Downtown Westminster area and Westminster Station TOD area. The city also manages a Residential Parking Permit Program for several areas near high schools that experience increased parking demand.



A sign for the Casual Carpool Program along US 36

4.6 TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) refers to strategies, policies and programs that help people use the transportation system more efficiently, while reducing traffic congestion, vehicle emissions, and fuel consumption. By providing other transportation options and amenities, TDM can encourage the use of modes of transportation other than single-occupant vehicles. TDM uses both incentive and disincentive-based strategies to shift travel habits. For example, an employer sponsored transit pass program can motivate people to ride transit and a managed parking program can help people think about the full cost of a personal vehicle. TDM efforts are supported by two Transportation Demand Management Associations (TMAs); Smart Commute Metro North and Commuting Solutions as well as DRCOG. TDM efforts are underway in Westminster and the region, the city will continue to expand the internal and external TDM programs, with guidance identified in the TMP.



4.7 EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

New transportation technologies are advancing quickly, with technological innovations in vehicles, the transportation network, and interactions between the two. Some advanced technologies are already seeing widespread implementation to improve safety and traffic flow in the Denver Metro Region. Although the specific forms and timing of emerging transportation technologies will vary and cannot be predicted with certainty, innovations with the potential to dramatically influence transportation are certainly on the horizon. It is important for jurisdictions to evaluate how technologies best serve their community as well as prepare for emerging technologies through development of policies, programs, and infrastructure. This section provides an overview of examples of emerging transportation technologies. The TMP will discuss these technologies further and identify strategies in which to evaluate and prepare for transportation technologies.

MOBILITY AS A SERVICE

New trends in transportation are helping to increase mobility options and creating a shift in reliance on personal vehicles. Mobility as a service has grown as easy-to-schedule trips through services such as ride-sourcing services (e.g., Uber, Lyft, taxi), bike share, car share, transit, and carpooling, have increased in popularity. The ride-sourcing industry has especially grown rapidly in the past decade and is anticipated to continue to advance and play an increasingly larger role in mobility in the future. The city has limited curbside management policies to prioritize the curbside access and use for multiple modes of transportation. Because of the variation in level of access, costs, and right-of-way requirements for mobility technologies, the city will evaluate this further during the development of the TMP and through individual review of development proposals.

MICROMOBILITY

Micromobility, also sometimes referred to as docked or dockless mobility, refers to a range of small, lightweight vehicles operated by humans at speeds below 15 MPH, generally powered by small batteries and can include bikes, e-bikes, and e-scooters. They can be shared or owned privately. The US market has been dominated by independent operators deploying and servicing a shared-use fleet.

This new mobility service can benefit the community by offering another transportation option; however, it must be strategically and safely managed. Designating, managing or sharing the public right-of-way is important, and especially challenging when space is limited and conflicts with pedestrians or motor vehicles are present. Past generation shared bikes/scooters required “docking” stations for locking, recharging, and redistribution. GPS and other



Micromobility Bike Share

technologies have removed the need for vehicles to be grounded at specific locations. Micromobility devices can be docked or undocked.

Beyond the immediate need to address safety issues with motorized bikes and e-scooters, cities should look at micromobility as an opportunity to build a robust and regionally coordinated governance and policy framework that can accommodate existing and future mobility options. Through the development of the TMP, the city will begin to evaluate how micromobility can be potentially effectively and safely integrated into Westminster's multimodal network and land uses, including identification of resources and policies required to manage micromobility.

Micromobility can play a key role in first and final mile solutions to transit and in short-trip making and contribute to a reduction of greenhouse gases.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

Alternative fuel vehicles, including electric vehicles, are becoming more common due to US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provisions designed to reduce US dependence on petroleum by accelerating the introduction of alternative fuel vehicles. In 2019, Colorado Governor Jared Polis signed an executive order to support Colorado's transition to zero emission vehicles.

To support and incentivize electric vehicle adoption, Westminster continues to seek resources and evaluate expansion of the implementation of electric vehicle charging stations throughout the city. To date, the city has received a number of grants to install charging stations throughout Westminster including in the Westminster Station Parking Garage, City Hall, Downtown Westminster Parking Garage, and the Municipal Service Center. The role of private development in providing charging facilities especially in multifamily or mixed-use communities is paramount to consumers' confidence.



Electric Vehicle Charging Stations



4.8 TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY GOALS

The following seven goals were created through the development of the TMP, using elements of existing transportation plans, Westminster's Strategic Plan, community and staff input and transportation industry best practices.

The goals will help guide the development of policies, recommendations, and implementation. The goals will also be used to inform the prioritization of projects and resources.

- **Connect:** Develop a comprehensive multimodal transportation network that includes convenient, safe, and accessible transportation options for all and integrates land use.
- **Thrive:** Support the community's economic resilience, environment, public health, and quality of life for all community members.
- **Protect:** Reduce traffic-related deaths and injuries by improving the safety and comfort for all modes of transportation.
- **Maintain:** Maintain the city's transportation assets and optimize the use of the transportation network.
- **Fund:** Pursue revenue resources to build, maintain, and operate new and existing transportation infrastructure and services.
- **Collaborate:** Identify and utilize opportunities to coordinate projects and funding with local, regional, state, and private partners.
- **Innovate:** Apply creative, sustainable, and cost-effective solutions to address transportation and mobility needs.

The Comprehensive Plan will be updated periodically to mirror any revisions to the goals or policies in the TMP.

WESTMINSTER'S TRANSPORTATION VISION

*Westminster
is supported
by an inclusive
and equitable
multimodal
transportation
network that
provides safe and
well-connected
transportation and
mobility choices
to connect all
people to local
and regional
destinations.*

This transportation vision was developed as part of the Transportation & Mobility Plan.

CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS



Education



Equity - Diversity and Inclusion



Health



Resilience



Safety



Climate

COMPLETE STREETS

Complete Streets are streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users. Those include people of all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are travelling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transportation riders. The concept of Complete Streets encompasses many approaches to planning, designing, and operating roadways and rights of way with all users in mind to make the transportation network safer and more efficient. (Sustainability Plan)

Complete Streets is addressed in the Transportation & Mobility Plan.

4.9 TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY POLICIES

This section provides comprehensive planning policies to move each TMP goal forward, in addition to the policies, strategies, and actions established in the TMP. Goals are defined as desired ideals and a value to be sought. Policies in this Comprehensive Plan articulate a course of action that guides governmental decision making to meet the goal. To further define how to achieve the goals and how policies can be implemented in the short- and long-term, specific strategies can be found in the Implementation Action Plan, a companion document to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

CONNECT



Goal TM-1 Develop a comprehensive multimodal transportation network that includes convenient, safe, and accessible transportation options for all and integrates land use.

- 1.1 Implement safe and connected access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of travel, as described in the Complete Streets policy in the TMP.
- 1.2 Continue development of a multimodal transportation network that supports the movement of people, goods, and services.
- 1.3 Develop a safe, comprehensive, and connected on- and off-street bicycle network consistent with the TMP recommendations.
- 1.4 Create and enhance a safe and accessible pedestrian network that ensures walkability and connectivity within the city and to adjacent communities.
- 1.5 Build new development and retrofit existing infrastructure and services to accommodate all modes of transportation to ensure accessibility, connectivity, and safety.
- 1.6 Recognize the importance of regional and local partnerships to connect adjacent communities.
- 1.7 Ensure private partners support access to transit, sidewalk and trails through implementation of first and last mile connections and services.



THRIVE



Goal TM-2 Support the community's economic resilience, environment, public health, and quality of life for all community members.

- 2.1 Link new development to safe and accessible sidewalks that connect to adjacent bus stops and community destinations and amenities.
- 2.2 Provide a transportation network that supports the reliable movement of goods and services.
- 2.3 Incorporate transit stops into the design and function of adjacent land uses and through other placemaking opportunities.
- 2.4 Create a strong sense of entry into and passage through the city at key locations and along key corridors.
- 2.5 Develop and maintain enhanced, cohesive streetscaping along corridors, with consideration of the visual and physical character.
- 2.6 Provide and improve transportation options that protect the environment, support public health, and enhance the quality of life for residents and businesses.
- 2.7 Explore and identify partnerships to implement strategies that ensure socially equitable transportation.

PROTECT



Goal TM-3 Reduce traffic-related deaths and injuries by improving the safety and comfort for all modes of transportation.

- 3.1 Implement street design and improvements that enhance safety and comfort for all users.
- 3.2 Ensure existing and future transportation improvements support accessibility for all users by meeting or exceeding standards including the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- 3.3 Coordinate within the city and with other agencies to reduce and eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries across all modes, as identified in the TMP and Vision Zero plans, goals, and initiatives.

FIRST AND LAST MILE

Travel to/from a transit stop or station is just as important as the transit trip. If potential transit riders are unable to access a stop or station due to poor infrastructure quality or missing pedestrian or bicycle connections, transit becomes ineffective. More communities, including Westminster, are focusing on ways to improve the first and final mile transportation options for transit users to ensure they can easily access stops and stations. RTD, in coordination with agencies and jurisdictions, including Westminster, developed a First and Last Mile Strategic Plan which identifies way to improve first and final mile trips.

VISION ZERO

Vision Zero is a safety approach with the core principle that "it can never be acceptable that people are killed or seriously injured when moving within the road transport system." Vision Zero switches safety from being solely the responsibility of street users to a shared responsibility of system designers and street users. It is inevitable that street users will make mistakes, so streets should be designed to ensure these mistakes do not result in severe injuries or fatalities (Source: DRCOG).

TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM)

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) refers to strategies, policies, and programs that help people use the transportation system more efficiently, while reducing traffic congestion, vehicle emissions, and fuel consumption. By providing transportation options and amenities, TDM can encourage the use of modes of transportation other than single-occupant vehicles.

MAINTAIN



Goal TM-4 Maintain the city's transportation assets and optimize the use of the transportation network.

- 4.1 Invest in the maintenance of the city's transportation system and supporting infrastructure and technology.
- 4.2 Incorporate Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs and strategies that maximize existing transportation infrastructure (including the power and broadband utilities within rights of way), as part of development plan review and implementation, capital improvements programming, and preparation of specific and area plans and corridor plans.
- 4.3 Ensure development is supported by appropriate vehicle and bicycle parking requirements as defined in city plans and standards.

FUND



Goal TM-5 Pursue revenue resources to build, maintain, and operate new and existing transportation infrastructure and services.

- 5.1 Leverage existing partnerships and pursue new opportunities to maximize funding to improve transportation infrastructure, programs, and services.
- 5.2 Pursue new, sustainable, and innovative revenue resources for transportation infrastructure, programs, and services.
- 5.3 Require new development to provide multimodal transportation improvements necessary to accommodate trips generated by the project.



COLLABORATE



Goal TM-6 Identify and utilize opportunities to coordinate projects and funding with local, regional, state, and private partners.

- 6.1 Coordinate with other agencies, such as CDOT, RTD, DRCOG, and adjacent communities, to implement a seamless and safe multimodal transportation network, as identified in the TMP.
- 6.2 Coordinate with public and private partners to support access to transit through implementation of first and last mile connections and services.
- 6.3 Pursue partnership and funding opportunities to expand and improve the transit network and service.

INNOVATE



Goal TM-7 Apply creative, sustainable, and cost-effective solutions to address transportation and mobility needs.

- 7.1 Explore and evaluate emerging technologies and their potential role in advancing Westminster's transportation system and maintenance of assets.
- 7.2 Pursue creative partnerships and funding sources to implement innovative transportation technologies.

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5.0

HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Westminster promotes a high quality of life and fosters a safe, inclusive, and healthy community. Key elements of this include opportunities for residents, visitors and employees to improve their personal wellness—physically, emotionally and intellectually—as well as public safety services to support the city’s neighborhoods and activity centers. Promoting arts and culture is also part of the city’s overall strategy to create a unique sense of place. Poverty, food insecurity, affordable housing, and homelessness continue to be a challenge to overall quality of life, resilience, and sense of community in Westminster and this Plan, as well as the Sustainability Plan and various city programs, identify strategies to support vulnerable populations. Many of these objectives are achieved through collaborative partnerships with public, private or nonprofit entities. This chapter supports the *Healthy Places* guiding principle and establishes a policy framework for the management of Westminster’s parks, open space, recreation and libraries, arts and culture, and public safety to ensure the city’s core services continue to support the needs of the community.

5.1 PARKS & RECREATION

EMBRACING THE OUTDOORS

Parks, recreation, and open space are vital elements of Westminster's high quality of life. They provide physical relief to urbanization, opportunities for leisure and activity, and preservation of environmentally valuable habitats and landscapes. The city and its residents take pride in the quality and extent of parks, community facilities, and open space that comprise the city's physical landscape. Westminster's Parks, Recreation, and Libraries Department is a three-time winner of the prestigious National Recreation and Parks Association Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management. The Parks, Recreation and Libraries' mission statement is, "Together we create exceptional opportunities for a vibrant community with a commitment to nature, wellness and literacy."

Over the past 50 years, the city has acquired or built seven award-winning recreation facilities, over 50 parks including the 205-acre city Park, two championship golf courses, an extensive 150-mile trail system and 3,100 acres of open space throughout the community. As of 2019, this system of parks, recreation and open space occupies approximately 38% of the city's land area. This is significantly higher than the neighboring communities of Arvada and Thornton at 21% and 11% respectively, and similar to Broomfield at 34%.

As a result, most residents can easily access the city's network of trails, parks and open spaces within a ten-minute, or half-mile walk. In fact, the 14-mile Big Dry Creek Trail, one of the most popular trails in the system, is used by an estimated 100,000 people annually and is a designated National Recreation Trail. In 2019, the recreation division offered 350 programs and classes with an estimated 192,250 program participants. Approximately, 1,156,154 attendees visited the recreation centers.

As the city approaches buildout, there will be fewer opportunities to physically expand the park and open space network. Acquisitions for new parks, open space and facilities will strategically focus on areas identified as underserved by existing facilities as well as opportunities to expand connections to existing parks and open space. Park and recreation planning will emphasize optimizing the use of the city's existing parks, recreation facilities and open spaces. Planning will be focused on improving access, maintaining and improving existing facilities, and enhancing recreation opportunities in the city. Additionally, the city will identify opportunities for providing high quality, well-designed parks and plazas to serve new residents in higher-intensity, mixed-use urban environments like Downtown Westminster and the Westminster Station Area.

Parks and recreation facilities provide opportunities for leisure, informal sports and gathering as well as formal recreation, sports



Cotton Creek Park



activities and programs. Well-designed park spaces can contribute significantly to a city's identity and sense of place. However, these spaces must be accessible, safe and well-maintained, and must meet the needs of the city's changing demographics, activity trends and expectations for quality programming. As Westminster shifts its focus from expansion to maintenance of the city's parks, recreation facilities and open space, these elements of design and function will be increasingly more significant.

PARKS AND RECREATION

The city currently maintains and operates 58 neighborhood, community and citywide parks, ranging in size from 0.7 to 2,327 acres and comprising 3,179 acres in total. The city also owns 22 acres of undeveloped parkland. In addition to the city's neighborhood and community parks, the city operates the 2,327-acre Standley Lake Regional Park and multiple recreation and sports facilities. Parks and community facilities are classified based on size, function and characteristics. Aside from the Standley Lake Regional Park, located at the western edge of the city, the majority of park space in the city is classified as neighborhood and community parks. These parks are an integral part of the city's high quality of life and are utilized by approximately 75% of Westminster residents on a daily basis.

While the parks offer ample recreation opportunities through both city programs and personal activities such as walking, running, cycling, fishing, and hiking, the parks are public spaces and accommodate a variety of other cultural and educational activities and events.

Residents have the ability to rent park pavilions throughout the city, as well as take advantage of water activities at Standley Lake. Other programmed events and activities available at the parks include educational nature hikes, workshops, and annual festivals and events hosted at city parks.

The city's parks and recreation system is augmented by the Hyland Hills Park and Recreation District, established in 1955. The District serves nearly 110,000 residents in a 24 square mile area located in Adams County including large areas of Westminster and adjacent municipalities with 27 parks, 29 sports fields, 3 community centers, 15 tennis courts, 3 outdoor swimming pools, a disc golf course, a skate park and batting cages at the Sports Complex. Noteworthy District facilities within Westminster include:

- The nationally acclaimed Greg Mastriona Golf Courses at Hyland Hills
- The Ice Centre at the Promenade as a joint endeavor with the City of Westminster
- Adventure Golf and Raceway
- The Donald E. VanArsdale Gymnastics Center
- The MAC, a center for active adult lifestyles jointly owned with the City of Westminster.



Water Recreation

Health and wellness is further promoted by the District through a variety of sports and recreational programs, before and after school programs, vacation camps, swimming lessons, sports leagues, preschool and other programs at low or minimal cost or residents.

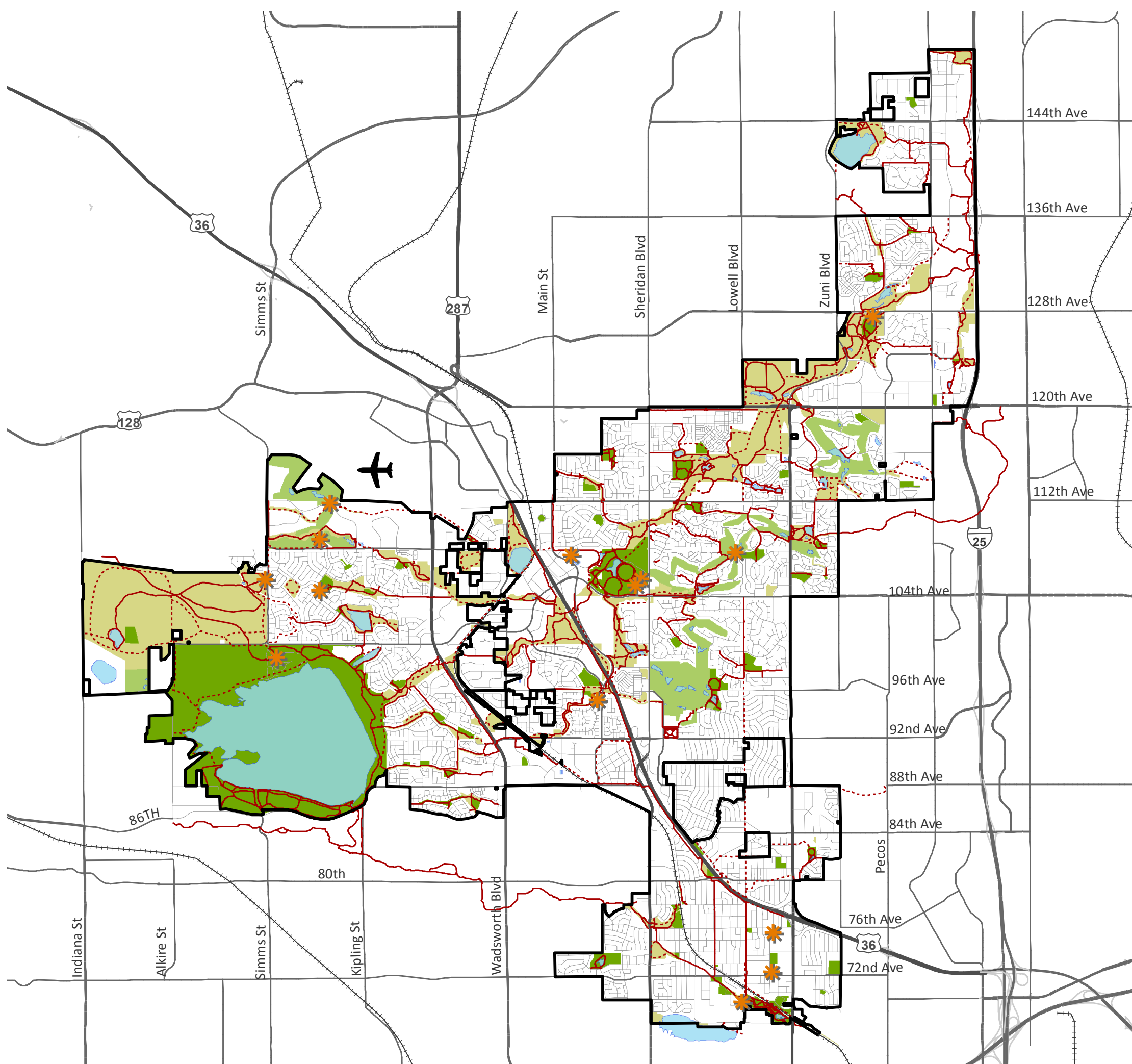
Park Needs and Improvements

2020 Community Survey reinforced the importance of providing parks and recreational opportunities to Westminster residents. Consistent with past years, 93% of residents felt beautiful parks/open spaces describes their image of the City of Westminster and selected parks and recreation related services to be among the most highly rated for quality. This includes recreation programs (85% very good or good), parks maintenance (81%), recreation facilities (85%), and trails (85%).

The city identifies sites for potential new parks as part of new and infill development. As a function of the city's geography and annexation history, areas south of 92nd Avenue have less access to parks as compared to north of 92nd Avenue. Provision of well-designed and strategically located park and civic spaces is a specific focus for the Downtown Westminster and Westminster Station areas and significant park spaces should be included in future planning in the Westminster Heights area. Additional new parks and improvements to existing facilities are outlined in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Recent projects have incorporated sustainable design features including native plants, permeable pavement, and a green roof and other green infrastructure. Use of reclaimed water to serve the public realm is a priority for the city and several park areas have been retrofitted with turf reduction and in other locations smart irrigation controllers to analyze and reduce water use.



Maintenance of Ballfield



Map 5-1. Parks, Open Space, and Trails System

Legend

- Parks
- Open Space
- Golf Courses
- Recreation Facilities
- Existing Trails
- Proposed Trails
- Highway
- Major roads
- Local roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Westminster



0 0.5 1 2 Miles



5.2 OPEN SPACE & TRAILS

Westminster's extensive open space system is a key element of its unique setting and identity as a Front Range community. The city has made preservation and protection of natural environments and habitats a priority, integrating their conservation into the physical development of the city. As a result, Westminster's visual landscape is rich with a variety of open spaces, trails, preserved historic sites, and scenic vistas.

The city's prior open space acquisitions were augmented with authorization for an open space sales tax in 1985 to purchase land for preservation and natural habitat protection, with the goal of preserving 15% of the city's overall land area. Westminster was the second city in Colorado to enact a sales tax for an open space acquisition program (after Boulder). Since then, Westminster has preserved over 3,100 acres throughout the city and has accomplished the goal of preserving 15% of the city's land area. This accomplishment demonstrates the city's commitment to preservation, conservation and resource sustainability. With the acquisition goal met, a transition is now underway to focus on stewardship of open space to ensure this resource will be preserved and maintained into the future. Strategic acquisitions will continue to expand the trail network, preserve areas with important habitat and flood control, as well as ensure all neighborhoods have access to nature and open space.

OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS NEEDS AND IMPROVEMENTS

The purpose of open space is to preserve publicly-owned areas for passive recreational use and protection of natural wildlife habitat. Open space areas can be found throughout the city, but are concentrated in the city's western area near Standley Lake and along drainage ways and irrigation ditches that cross the community, including Walnut Creek, Big Dry Creek, the Farmers' High Line Canal and Little Dry Creek. Open space properties are publicly owned lands purchased with the open space sales tax, public land dedications, donations, grants and general funds. Open space does not include undeveloped private property.

Open space provides for protection of sensitive habitat areas and wildlife movement corridors, view corridors and preservation of open and rural landscapes. Additionally, the city's open space system provides recreation opportunities such as hiking, biking, fishing, horseback riding and nature study. Many of the city's open spaces are linear connections that follow major creek corridors or serve as buffers between developments. These linear connections allow for an extensive network of trails that play a vital role in the city, linking neighborhoods, parks, schools and employment areas to a citywide and regional trail system. In all, Westminster currently has over 150 miles of trails. The Big Dry Creek Trail is the most heavily utilized of Westminster's off-road trail system. The trail meanders nearly 12 miles, within Westminster, from Standley



Photo Credit: Ed Neville

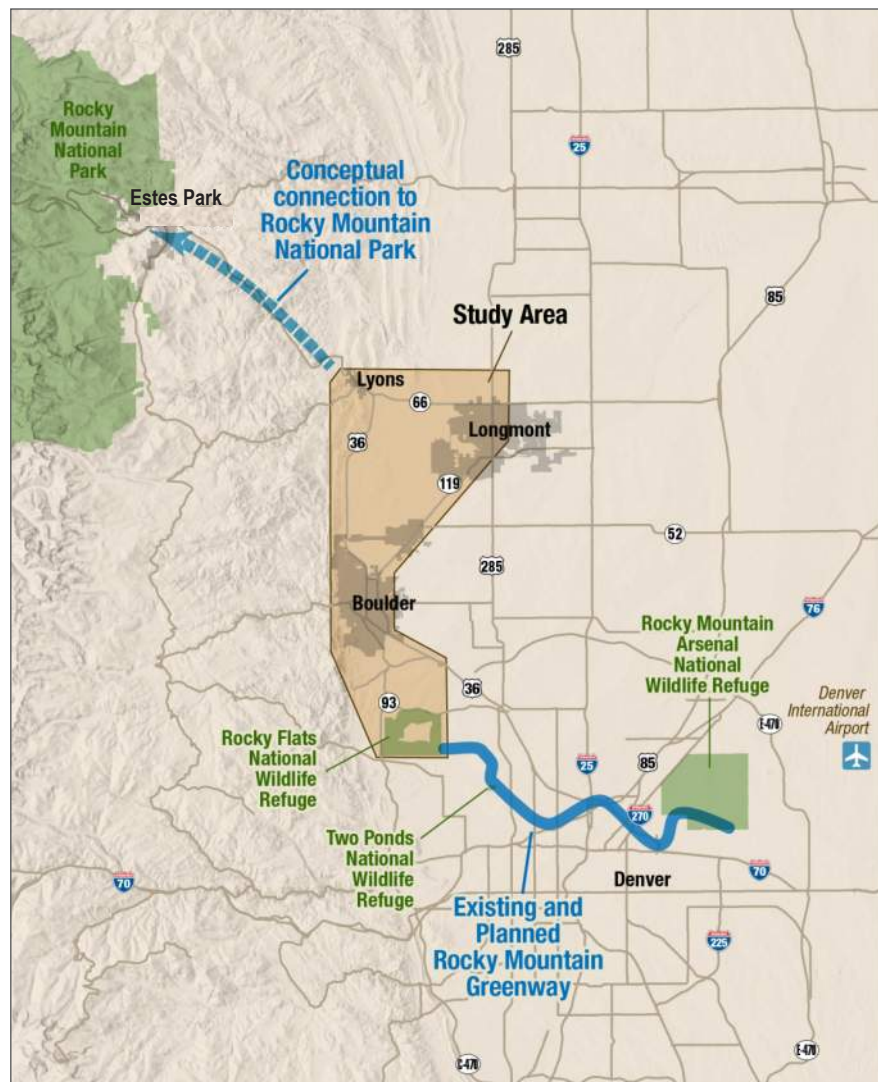


Little Dry Creek Trail at Westminster Station

Lake Regional Park to Interstate 25 and beyond into Thornton. Big Dry Creek Trail crosses under most streets through underpasses, which are being beautified by local artists with a series of murals. The US 36 Bikeway was also completed, connecting Denver to Boulder via the Little Dry Creek Trail, through Historic Westminster and then from 80th Avenue the trail extends 18 miles to the Table Mesa Park-n-Ride in Boulder on a dedicated 12-foot-wide concrete trail.

The city's open space and trail systems also connect to the larger regional system, particularly to the west of the city where vast areas of open space are preserved in the City of Boulder, Boulder County, and Jefferson County, while also connecting to the east to trails in Thornton, Adams County and ultimately to the Rocky Mountain National Wildlife Refuge. Westminster's open spaces are a major asset for the community, providing trails, wide open spaces for recreation and passive use as well as habitat for wildlife.

Figure 5-1. Rocky Mountain Greenway Trail Map





In 2014, the city completed the Open Space Stewardship Plan. This plan identifies priorities for land acquisition and open space management. Future acquisitions will be strategic and focused on protecting viewsheds, preserving unique natural areas and purchasing properties that will improve trail access throughout the city. Enhancement of the city's open spaces will also be pursued including trail improvements and addition of educational areas in order to attract greater use of the system. However, maintenance and operations of the city's existing open space system will be critical, particularly as use of open space and trail facilities will only increase with Westminster's projected residential and employment population growth.

The Trails Master Plan identifies trails and connection points along the main trail corridors of Walnut Creek, Big Dry Creek, the Farmers' High Line Canal and Little Dry Creek. This plan was last updated in 2014 and provides a basis for trail connections in both open space and new development in the city. Almost 60 miles of new trail are proposed as part of this plan. These new trail alignments include improvements to the Little Dry Creek Trail and other connections to facilitate the completion of the first phase of the Rocky Mountain Greenway Trail, which mostly follows the Little Dry Creek Trail alignment in Arvada and Westminster. Improvements to the open space and trails system are outlined in these master plans.

Westminster residents patronize the trail system extensively with over 1,100,000 trail users in 2019. During the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic particular trail sections experienced exponential increases in trail usage, which is further testament to the community's desire for healthy living.



Farmer's High Line Canal Trail

Table 5-1. Westminster 2019 Trail Usage

Trail	Total Count of Users
Big Dry Creek Trail	91,298
Farmer's High Line Canal Trail	23,982
(Floating Count)	92,290
Little Dry Creek Trail	70,115
Standley Lake North – Greenway	62,617
Standley Lake South – Greenway	49,123
Walnut Creek	15,727
Greenway	137,750
Westminster Hills Dog Park Car Counter	831,268
Total:	1,374,170

5.3 HEALTHY LIVING

Jefferson County Public Health and Tri-County Health are the local public health agencies however the City of Westminster provides avenues to increase awareness of and access to healthy lifestyle options, including recreation opportunities and healthy foods. At the forefront of wellness programming is the Parks, Recreation, and Libraries Department whose mission for delivering exceptional services focuses on nature, wellness, and literacy.

Wellness Programs

A major element of the parks and recreation system is the programming of healthy living activities for youth, adults, and families. In 2019 the city's recreation programs had over 190,000 participants and recreation facilities recorded an attendance of over 1,100,000 persons. Key program areas include wellness, outdoor, educational enrichment, swimming, and sports. The city offers extensive and diverse programming and activities for the enjoyment of its parks by residents throughout the year. Westminster's Parks, Recreation, and Libraries Activity Guide is an important resource to engage and involve residents in these activities and offerings, and serves as the most utilized source of information about city programs and services by residents related to these amenities.

Food Access

In consideration of geographic areas of the community with limited food access, the Comprehensive Plan identifies goals and policies to support access to healthy food and support services. Coloradans have experienced temporary food shortages during major snow events, however the COVID-19 pandemic further brought awareness of populations with food insecurity, limitations of the food distribution system, and the need to plan for a resilient, year-round food supply.



Lifeguard at Swimming Pool



Growing Home



Through partnerships, the city provides food assistance to Westminster residents. In coordination with Westminster Public Schools, the city offers a free Summer Lunch Program for children 18 years of age and under. Adults can also purchase reduced-cost lunches through this program. The city complements the free summer lunch program at city Center Park and Countryside Park and Pool with the “Never Play Hungry” program, which is designed to encourage all children to eat healthy as they stay active. Several human services agencies and non-profits receive funding through the city’s Human Services Board that provide food assistance.

While the city does not determine which food retailers locate within the community, land use policies can direct placement of healthy food outlets and limit retailers whose offerings are predominated by inexpensive processed foods that undercuts the viability of other food retailers and lowers the quality of offerings. The Westminster Sustainability Plan includes an action to inventory food retailers, markets and food banks to determine food desert and food swamp areas in Westminster through a citywide mapping analysis of walksheds and other barriers to food access.

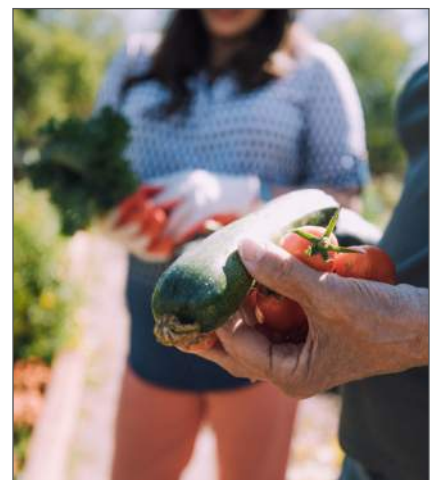
The City of Westminster currently has five community gardens, three located within Historic Westminster, one located on the west side of the city and one located in the northern area of the city. A successful community garden depends on several factors: a neighborhood with sufficient density to access the garden and with limited private yard areas for growing, visibility and safety, water availability, parking, walkability, ease of implementation – such as grade, and a location that is unserved by other gardens. The Comprehensive Plan and Westminster Municipal Code provide avenues to further promote access to healthy food by promoting opportunities for year-round urban agriculture such as greenhouses and residential food sales and ensuring new development provides sufficient area for creation of on-site growing.



Westminster Community Garden



Community Garden



Vegetables Grown in Garden

5.4 CULTURE & ARTS

ARTS AND CULTURE

Arts and culture play a critical role in communities. They stimulate the economy, spur innovation, and beautify cities. Research increasingly points to the role of arts and culture in achieving social priorities—improving quality of life, increasing connections, ensuring wellness, and educating and enlightening citizens. Public art plays an important role in relating the character of the city, and in creating opportunity for residents and visitors to participate and share in its development. Westminster boasts a variety of programs and opportunities for residents to connect with and grow the art and culture throughout Westminster, including the public art program, Adventure Pass, and Historic Westminster Art District. The city recently completed an Arts & Culture Master Plan to outline a long-term vision and recommendations for achieving that vision. It prioritizes leveraging resources, partnerships and activities to ensure the work is sustainable and fits within other community and city goals. The Arts & Culture Plan further draws connections between citywide goals for livability, accessibility, community identity and growth with strategies to embed arts and culture into city activities,

Many residents also enjoy regional facilities such as the Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities, cultural programs hosted by the University of Colorado at Boulder and a multitude of museums, cultural events and performing arts in Denver.

Art Enrichment

The Parks, Recreation, and Libraries Department hosts a number of art programs for both adults and children to complement recreational programming. These offerings include painting, needle felting, mixed media, glass etching, and recently updated pottery studio. Art events such as the annual Chili Bowl Luncheon and Holiday Pottery Sales further spread art enrichment opportunities to the greater community.

Public Art

The City of Westminster's Public Art Program represents the evolution of public and private investment, consistently high development standards, and the continual establishment of partnerships between the city and the development community—enhancing the overall experience of the built environment in Westminster. More than 170 art installations contribute to the overall program and punctuate spaces ranging from city Hall and other city facilities to commercial centers throughout Westminster. The intent of the program is not to simply embellish architecture, but to integrate art into the fabric of the overall community. Public spaces, including parks, fire stations, libraries and City Hall, are commonly recognized as locations for public art, based on public ownership and accessibility. Funds from the city's hotel/motel tax-funded Community Enhancement Fund





have been used for many of these installations. Other methods that the city has used to acquire art have been through grant funds received from the Denver metro area Scientific and Cultural Facilities District

Public art can also be found in commercial shopping centers and office parks. Many private installations are driven by the city's requirement that multifamily, mixed-use, and non-residential developments greater than 1 acre include public art, while others are voluntary. Westminster is one of only a handful of cities nationwide with such a program and provision of public art citywide.

Community Events and Participation

The Adventure Pass is a program connecting residents with the region's cultural and recreational attractions. This program provides free access to explore cultural and recreational attractions in the community. The library currently has contracts with the Butterfly Pavilion, Colorado State Parks, Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Dinosaur Ridge, Standley Lake Regional Park, Westminster Recreation Centers, and more. The city also works closely with local organizations and non-profits such as Ralston House, Westminster Legacy Foundation, and Westminster Historical Society.

The city hosts a number of special events throughout the year with total participation of over 53,000 in 2019. A number of local organizations also host festivals and events throughout the year, with support from the city. Regular events in Westminster have become quite popular, including the Latino Festival, Movie in the Park, Westy Craft Brew Fest, Historic Westminster Summer Festival, Halloween Harvest Festival, and the Holiday Lighting Ceremony. Outside of city programs, the designation of the Historic Westminster Art District offers events and installations of public art for the public.



Mural at Big Dry Creek



Photo Credit: Ed Neville



Westminster Librarian

5.5 EDUCATION & LITERACY

Learning and library services are key components of city life and ensuring the next generation has opportunities for social and economic advancement.

LIBRARIES

The city operates three libraries—Irving Street Library, College Hill Library, and kiosks with full access to the library's digital databases are available at the West View Recreation Center. The Irving Street Library is located in Historic Westminster, adjacent to the Irving Street Park on Irving Street at 74th Avenue. The College Hill Library on 112th Avenue is a joint public and academic facility for the city and Front Range Community College. The libraries offer a variety of services in addition to media rental, including free Wi-Fi, computer access, and a variety of youth and adult services and events. With increased access and resources on the digital branch, Online Westminster Library, the city's library services reflect the ever-evolving technology and cultural needs of the Westminster community. Library patrons for 2019 include 36,033 resident and 29,315 non-residents, with a total of 395,509 patrons visiting the libraries, over 556,800 items circulated, and over 42,000 reference questions were answered.

Westminster libraries offer diverse and popular programs for the community. "The Library's programs and services are diverse and inclusive; one of the most popular is the Citizenship Preparation class. In 2015, more than three hundred people participated to prepare for Naturalization tests and interviews. This program and others such as One-on-One Technology Help in English and Spanish, and Job Hunt Help, truly position the Library as a community resource center." (Westminster Public Library Master Plan 2017-2021) Westminster libraries also provide seven early literacy that allow children to play educational games, for which over 9,000 sessions were recorded in year 2019.

While Westminster Public Library lacks a presence in the west and northeast areas of town, through the Colorado Libraries Collaborate! Program, any Colorado public library cardholder (including Westminster residents) can check out materials from any participating library in the state. Many residents in the northeast part of town regularly use the Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library in Broomfield and the Anythink Library Wright Farms in Adams County. Similarly, many residents in the west use Jefferson County's Standley Lake Branch. There is opportunity to take advantage of high traffic areas such as Westminster Station and Downtown Westminster to provide library services in these places as well.



LEARNING FACILITIES

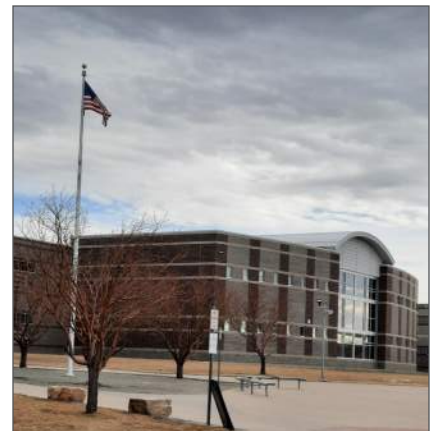
Westminster is served by three school districts: Jefferson County, Adams 12 Five Star Schools (Adams 12) and Westminster Public Schools. Schools located within the city are administered by each individual school district. Within Westminster, there are 17 elementary schools, five middle schools and five high schools, as shown in Table 5-2. School sites are shown on Figure X. Five public charter schools are located within the city as well as the Belleview Christian School, part of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), located in the Westminster Castle at the Pillar of Fire church.

In addition to secondary schools, Westminster is home to several higher education facilities. The main campus of the Front Range Community College serves approximately 5,000 full and 13,900 part time students (for the 2018-19 academic year). The campus includes a joint library facility that serves both the city and the college. Two additional private universities in the city include the University of Phoenix and DeVry University. Each of these schools provides both two and four-year undergraduate degrees as well as graduate level education. Westminster is also accessible to other schools in the region such as University of Colorado, Colorado School of Mines, Regis University, Colorado Christian University, Metropolitan State University and University of Denver.

Career training programs are also available from the Adams County Workforce and Business Center and the Jefferson County Business & Workforce Center. Both offer training for employers to support career development for their employees as well as classes for job seekers and displaced workers with targeted programs for youth and veterans.

Projected Enrollment

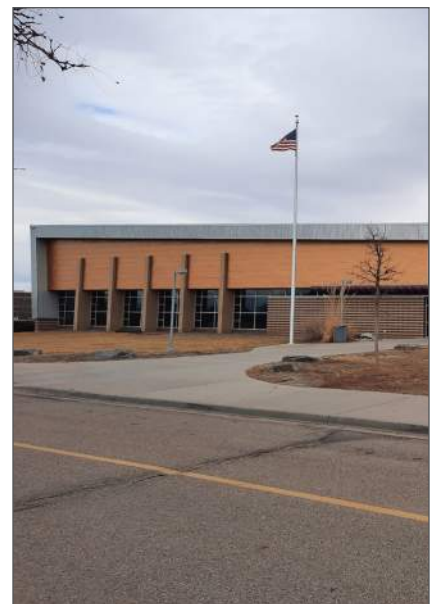
Many factors determine future school age population including housing affordability for families, migration patterns, and birth rates. Nationally, birth rates have dropped over the last decade and Colorado's is decreasing faster than the national rate. All three public school districts serving Westminster anticipate declining enrollment over the 2040 Plan horizon. The falling birth rate and the decrease in the under age 19 population cohort relative to the balance of the Westminster population are key factors. Many of the traditional single-family neighborhoods in Westminster are adult singles or couples without children or whose children are no longer school aged as younger families have moved to more distant suburbs with lower housing costs. Recent market-rate multi-family development in Westminster consists primarily of studio and one-bedroom floor plans that do not lend themselves to raising families. Local school districts in some cases have already closed or consolidated learning facilities. The few large remaining residential lands in Westminster such as the Pillar of Fire and Northgate may slow the rate of enrollment decline but not generate sufficient student population to necessitate significant additional facilities according to school district officials.



Mountain Range High School



Colorado STEM Academy



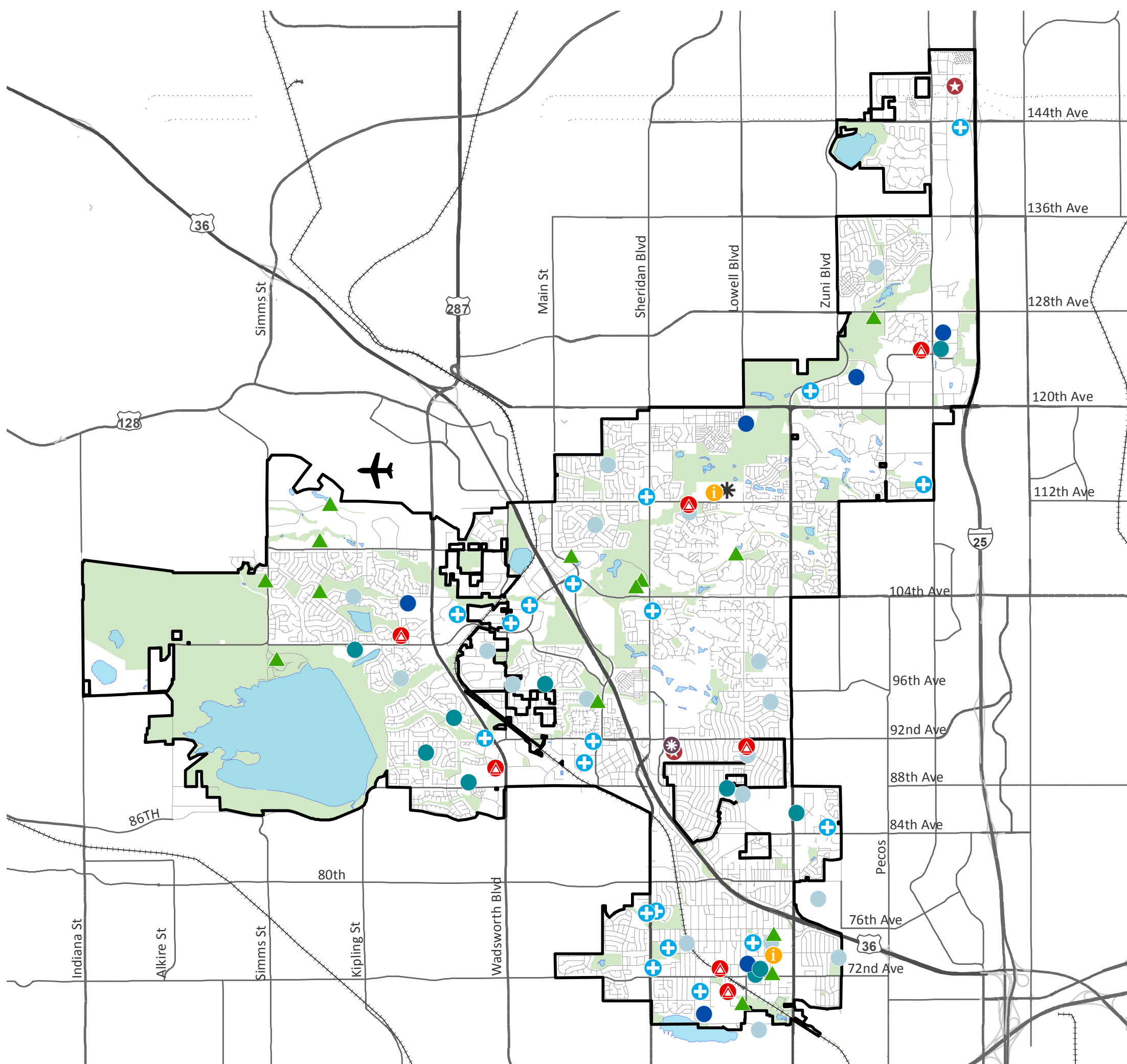
Silver Hills Middle School

Planned Facilities

Planning and location of public schools within the city is directed by each district based largely on the location of existing school facilities and population projections in each neighborhood. As new residential development occurs, the city requires either land dedication or a cash-in-lieu payment to ensure adequate school infrastructure is available. Westminster Municipal Code outlines the methodology used to calculate fees and/or land area for dedication. The city's land dedication requirements have resulted in many of Westminster's school sites being donated to the school districts at no cost. Identification of need and potential locations for new facilities will be addressed as development occurs within the city, in coordination with the appropriate school district. As such, no new facilities are identified on the Land Use Diagram in chapter 3.

Table 5-2. Existing Public Schools Serving Westminster

School	District	School	District
Elementary (K-5)		High	
Arapahoe Ridge Elementary	Adams 12	Mountain Range High School	Adams 12
Cotton Creek Elementary		Standley Lake High	Jefferson County
Rocky Mountain Elementary		Adco Alternative Center for Education	Westminster Public Schools
Betty Adams Elementary	Jefferson County	Hidden Lake High School	Westminster High
Lukas Elementary		Charter Schools	
Ryan Elementary		The Academy Charter School (Main Campus)	Adams 12
Semper Elementary		The Academy Charter School (North Campus)	
Sheridan Green Elementary		Woodrow Wilson Charter Academy	Jefferson County
Witt Elementary		Jefferson Charter Academy High School	
Zerger Elementary		Crown Pointe Academy	Westminster Public Schools
Flynn Elementary	Westminster Public Schools		
Harris Park Elementary			
Mesa Elementary			
Skyline Vista Elementary			
Sunset Ridge Elementary			
Westminster Elementary			
Middle (6-8)			
Silver Hills Middle School	Adams 12		
Mandalay Middle School	Jefferson County		
Moore Middle School			
Wayne Carle Middle School			
Shaw Heights Middle School	Westminster Public Schools		



Map 5-2. Community Facilities

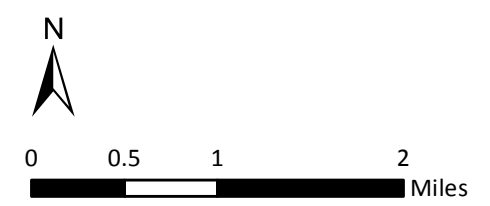
Legend

- City Hall
- Fire Stations
- Police Facilities
- Libraries
- Recreation Facilities
- Health Facilities

Public Schools

- Elementary
- Middle
- High
- College

- Highway
- Major roads
- Local roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Parks and Open Space
- Westminster





5.6 PUBLIC SAFETY & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Westminster is a full service city when it comes to providing public safety, unlike some of its municipal neighbors. The city provides police, fire, and medical transport services to Westminster residents, and works towards hazard preparedness and mitigation. According to the 2020 Westminster Biannual Citizen Survey, 68% of residents reported that they feel very or somewhat safe from violent crimes, and 68% reported feel very or somewhat safe from property crimes.

The Westminster Police Department (WPD) enforces all Colorado State laws and Westminster Municipal Code Ordinances through patrol operations, crime investigations, and crime prevention. The Department also educates the community about drugs, traffic safety, graffiti, and pet ownership. WPD has approximately 200 sworn personnel and 80 civilian personnel. Major functions of the Department include patrol operations, SWAT team, K9 unit, training, emergency management, investigations, records, evidence storage, sex offender registration, victim services, and liquor enforcement. The police department participates in the North Metro Task Force through an intergovernmental agreement. This task force investigates criminal cases involving the sale, possession, manufacture and/or distribution of narcotics.

Neighborhood services provided by WPD include animal management, graffiti abatement and a variety of community education and outreach activities. Additional field services include enforcement and special needs of city owned parks, recreation facilities, libraries, and trail systems; providing safe learning environments for children through School Resource Officers; and enforcement of traffic regulations/control, accident investigation and safety education through the Traffic Unit.

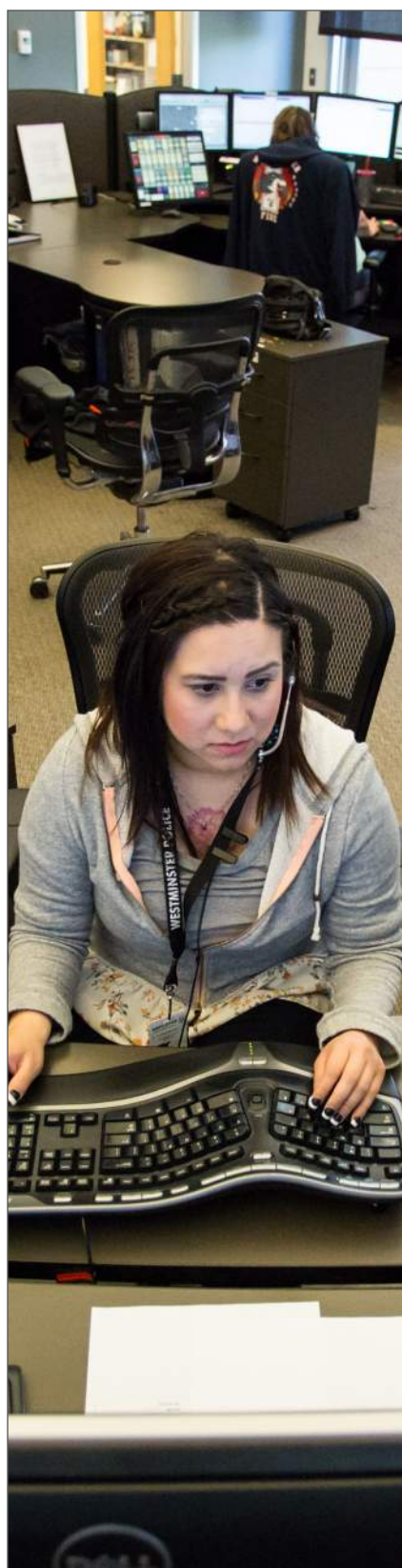
The Westminster Fire Department (WFD) is responsible for the protection of life and property through fire prevention, education, fire suppression, and emergency medical and rescue services, as well as emergency management. With six fire stations strategically located around the city, the department responds to over 12,000 calls a year. Almost 70% of those are medical related. The remainder of calls include response to fires, alarms, hazardous materials, rescues (water, technical, etc.) and public assists. Response time is typically under six minutes. Since 2016 calls have increased approximately 16%, which has implications for staffing, facilities and equipment.

WFD received internationally acclaimed accreditation status through the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE). This designation certifies that a fire department follows the best practices with a commitment to continuous improvement. Through the accreditation process, the department also attained the highest Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating that a fire and

ISO RATING

WFD has achieved the best possible fire protection class rating issued by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) - an ISO 1 rating. The Class 1 rating is important to property owners who may now see a reduction in their insurance premiums. The new rating is a prestigious designation that few fire protection districts in the nation have achieved. The ISO rating is evaluated approximately every five years. Moving to a "Class 1" places WFD in the prestigious group of only 240 departments throughout the country with an ISO rating of 1.





Westminster Police Call Center

emergency service organization can achieve, ISO Class 1. Of the 266 accredited agencies in the United States, only 77 agencies have achieved the top rating of ISO Class 1.

Mixed-use developments represent a unique challenge from both a fire protection and EMS services perspective. Limited access points, reduced street widths, lack of emergency apparatus/vehicle staging and deployment opportunities and traffic control features present challenges to responding emergency units. Changes in building sizes and configurations, internally and externally, present challenges unique to each infill project. A close working relationship with the Community Development Department has and will continue to serve the community well in coordinating the Fire Department's response to challenges presented by future infill projects.

The City of Westminster's Emergency Management division provides an assortment of preparedness resources for businesses, residents, houses of worship, and schools. The city offers numerous systems to alert and notify community members about emergencies, including the Emergency Warning and Evacuation System, CodeRed emergency notifications, and Emergency Alert System. The Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) identifies several high priority actions for implementation, including natural hazards public information booths and social media, local climate change awareness, continued floodplain land acquisition, and Clear Creek Watershed protection and wildfire mitigation.

The City of Westminster offers and supports many community safety activities and programs including National Night Out, Citizen's Police Academy, Teen Police Academy, and more. Residents can also learn about the services provided by the Westminster Fire Department and emergency services systems through the Westminster Citizens Fire Academy.

HAZARD RESILIENCY

The Comprehensive Plan plays an important role in planning for hazards, as it establishes guiding principles and policies that recognize the influence of floodplains and topography, water supply, waste water infrastructure, and stormwater management have over land use patterns. The 2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) strengthens that policy foundation to ensure resiliency and hazard mitigation is a priority for decision-makers.

The quantity and quality of water is central to the natural hazard concerns in Westminster. Drought and extreme rain events are high probabilities and high impact events for both the economy and natural ecosystems. Extreme rain events resulting in flooding have the potential to endanger a large number of people, damage or destroy critical infrastructure, businesses, and homes, as well as damage parks and open space. However, extreme snow and cold events are Westminster's most common meteorological hazard, and can equally endanger vulnerable populations, damage critical infrastructure, and impact economic activity. Climate change

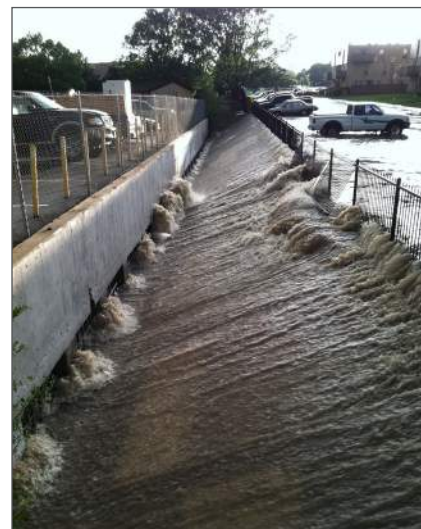


is also causing greater swings in weather extremes, including dryer and wetter periods and warmer and colder events. This trend makes extreme weather events a more frequent hazard vulnerability for the Front Range. Potential consequences of these natural hazards that require mitigation include:

- Degraded watersheds and water quality;
- Increased water processing costs;
- Infrastructure failure (e.g., electrical system, roads, stormwater system, water and wastewater utility systems);
- Loss of biodiversity;
- Degraded air quality;
- Endangered people and property;
- Financial setbacks, losses, and threatened economic activity; and
- Drought

According to the 2018 HMP, residents with access and functional needs, the homeless, seniors, children, and the economically vulnerable are identified as highly vulnerable to the risk of hazards. This vulnerability is exacerbated by the 70% rise in the median home price between 2000–2018, while the poverty level has almost doubled to 8% in the past two decades. People with disabilities also run a higher risk of vulnerability to natural hazards, and approximately 10.5% of residents cope with some form of disability (i.e. mobility, cognitive, sensory, independent living, and self-care). Noteworthy is that 34% of Westminster residents 65 years and older have a form of disability. In consideration of the significant population growth expected in the senior population, the city is likely to have 4,000 additional seniors with disabilities within the next 10 to 15 years.

Emergency and disaster preparedness efforts must ensure these populations are provided equal access and reasonable accommodation. The increasing probability of weather extremes must also influence building and site design, land use patterns, and key infrastructure design and placement. Based on the 2017 business survey, more than 75% of businesses did not have a contingency plan in place for disaster events. Westminster's Business Development Team is working on an approach to increase awareness about the need for businesses to have a plan in place before an event, as well as strategies to address economic resiliency. Westminster's economic and social resilience is strongly dependent on the natural and physical environment and the city's responses to maintaining and enhancing those resources.



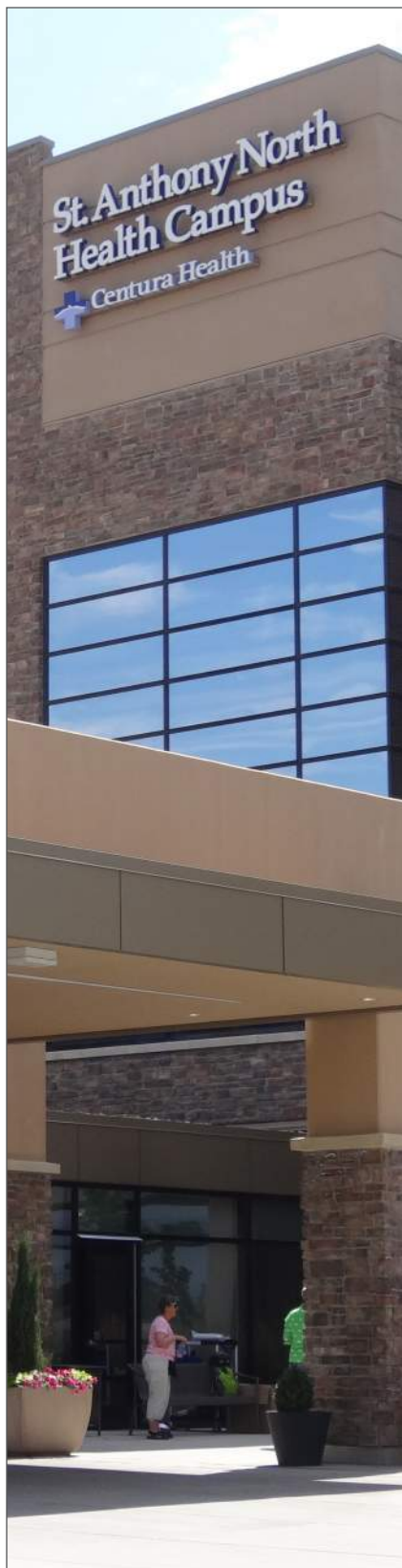
EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

As described above, Westminster Fire Department responds to emergency medical calls and provides medical transport to area facilities. In 2019 there were over 8,500 medical calls and over 6,300 of those, approximately 75 percent, required medical transport to areas hospitals. Within the city there are two hospital facilities with emergency rooms: Centura Health St. Anthony North and the Centura Health St. Anthony 84th Avenue Neighborhood Health Center. A number of smaller urgent care and emergency care facilities are also located throughout the community that have relationships with area hospitals.

Centura Health opened the St. Anthony North Campus in 2015 with a mission of providing a regional wellness facility for Westminster, Erie, Brighton, Broomfield, Northglenn, and Thornton. This campus includes 60,000 square feet of integrated physician clinics for both primary and specialty care, ambulatory surgery center, birthing center, level III Trauma Center with 24/7 emergency services, 100 inpatient beds, and outpatient diagnostics center with lab and imaging services. Future expansion is anticipated at this campus and should be considered in the context of the North I-25 Focus Area (see chapter 2 for more details).

Many services were relocated from St. Anthony 84th Avenue Neighborhood Health Center to the new St. Anthony North campus. The 84th Avenue campus continues to provide a range of primary care services, in particular senior care, and maintains an emergency room for residents and businesses in the surrounding area.

HealthONE North Suburban, SCL Health, and University of Colorado Health (UCHealth) maintain hospitals with emergency care in Arvada, Broomfield, and Thornton that are often the closest facility from many locations within Westminster. Kaiser Permanente maintains two medical office facilities in Westminster and partners with nearby hospital facilities for emergency care.



St. Anthony North Health Campus



The Center at Northridge



5.7 HUMAN SERVICES

The city provides a number of diverse assistance programs to help residents financially, socially, and environmentally. These are generally provided through partnerships with public and nonprofit organizations. Guidance for these assistance programs for water billing, food, home repairs, safety and more can be found in one convenient location online in both English and Spanish.

The Westminster Human Services Board identifies avenues to provide assistance in food, health, mental health services and housing for the citizens of Westminster. The Human Services Board reviews, evaluates and recommends to city Council funding levels for the budget year based on applications from outside human service agencies and other nonprofit organizations, considering how to best allocate funds to provide human services to the residents of Westminster. In 2019, the Human Services Board providing funding to 28 different organizations that support community health, wellness and human development within Westminster.

Discounts and Free Programs

Westminster residents may be eligible for discounts related to internet access, energy rebates, recreation passes, small business loans, health prescriptions, and solar infrastructure. Residents also have access to a number of free services and programs including the following:

- **Emergency and Essential Home Repair Program:** The City of Westminster provides federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for an Emergency and Essential Home Repair Program, which is intended to assist owner-occupied, low-income households in making repairs deemed essential to preserving the health, safety, and welfare of the home's occupants.
- **Growing Home:** A nonprofit organization with a participant-centered approach to strengthening families, nurturing children and connecting community filling a critical gap for families and children who are experiencing immediate and long-term barriers to stability and success. Assistance offered includes homelessness, affordable housing, a food pantry, as well as learning and school readiness programs.
- **Internet services in the library:** The library's wireless network is open to all visitors free of charge and without filters.
- **Laundry Truck:** Located at the Irving Street Library at 7392 Irving Street from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. on the first Monday of every month the temperature is above 40-degrees Fahrenheit, the service from Bayaud Enterprises is available for free to community members.
- **Legal services for tenants:** Qualifying low-income residents can receive free assistance through Colorado Legal Services (CLS) for issues related to unfair practices by landlords, or with legal assistance in eviction proceedings.



Municipal Court Employees



Library Services



Food Stamp Assistance



Graffiti Abatement



Snowplow Service

- **Library cards:** Your first Westminster library card is free. Since they are good for life, a library card provides access to everything the library offers – books, DVDs, magazines, research databases, computers, and more!
- **Program Eligibility Application Kit (PEAK):** PEAK is a quick and easy way for people in Colorado to get answers to questions on health, nutrition, and other assistance programs.
- **Shower Truck:** On Mondays, from 9 a.m. - noon, the Living Well Shower truck is available for community members to use free of charge at Irving Street Library, 7392 Irving St. Showers only operate when the temperature is 40-degrees Fahrenheit or above.
- **SnowBusters:** The SnowBusters program is a free service the city offers to seniors or disabled residents living within the city limits. Volunteers shovel the homeowner's public walkway within 24 hours following a measurable snowfall.
- **Story time:** Free story times at the library for kids up to 5 yrs old.
- **Speak English:** Free morning and evening conversation groups to help you speak English more confidently.
- **Citizenship Preparation Classes:** Participants discuss and practice both written test questions and oral interview questions. Classes are open to all community members interested in finding out more about the citizenship process, not just those practicing for the test.
- **Spanish Conversation Club:** Join other Spanish speakers and practice your language skills in a fun and friendly atmosphere. The goal is to speak only Spanish during club meetings.
- **Job Hunt Help:** Free one-on-one help is available to job hunters. Get help with online applications, resumes and cover letters, and looking for job openings.
- **Computer classes:** Drop in for free, one-on-one technology help to better learn computers, tablets and eReaders.
- **Standley Lake Programs:** Standley Lake Regional Park offers a wide variety of nature programs for all ages and backgrounds to enjoy year-round.
- **Special Events:** Visit the events page to learn about the varied events offered by the city throughout the year, many of which are completely free to attend.
- **Hazardous Waste Program:** The city contracts with Waste Management At Your Door Special Collection, Inc. to collect household hazardous waste directly from your home, by appointment, FREE of charge.
- **Mediation Services:** Mediation is a way to solve problems and settle disagreements with neighbors, family members or people threatening to take you to court. It is faster, cheaper, easier and provides more control than going to court. Jefferson County Mediation Services (JCMS) is the most comprehensive community mediation program in Colorado, providing the county with free mediation services for more than 20 years.



Homelessness Issues and Resources

According to the Point-in-Time annual census summarized in the Westminster Homelessness Update from April 2019, Westminster likely has 100 people living in places not intended for human habitation on any given night. Many of these individuals are chronically homeless, veterans, have disabilities, or suffer from serious mental illness, substance abuse, or chronic health problems. This report also suggests that there may be as many as 1,000 homeless school-age children in Westminster as well. This includes children that not only meet the HUD-definition of homelessness, but also those students who are doubled and tripled up, with more than one family living in a space intended for one for financial reasons.

Colorado has the third largest percentage of homeless families with children who are unsheltered, living in a car, outdoors, or in another area not intended for human habitation compared to the rest of the nation. Colorado also ranked third place of all the states with the largest increase from 2017-2018 in the number of chronically homeless.¹

According to the 2019 Jefferson County Comprehensive Homeless Count, the largest gaps in service needs included housing assistance, shelter, help finding a job, and transportation assistance. The primary barriers to providing these services to the homeless were reported as transportation, cost of services, and lack of mailing address.²

The city's current homelessness initiatives include:

- **Funding Partners:** The city helps fund homeless service providers and food banks, partially funds detox centers with other municipalities, and connects local non-profits with federal and other grant opportunities.
- **Connecting People to Services:** The city works with non-profits and regional agencies to distribute information through metro-wide databases and platforms, and to provide regular bathing and laundry services.
- **Housing and Temporary Shelter:** The city is actively building more affordable housing throughout the city, has recruited more hotels and motels to accept housing vouchers on severe weather nights, and assigned \$5.9 million received from the State of Colorado to apply to low-interest mortgage and down payment assistance program operated by the Colorado Housing Finance Authority.
- **Regional Collaboration:** The city offers Mental Health First Aid trainings, created a new internal Homeless Task Force, and participates in countywide and regional public health campaigns, initiatives, and organizations

¹ Westminster Homelessness Update Spring 2019

² Jefferson County 2019 Comprehensive Homeless Count

CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

A chronically homeless individual or family has a head of household who has been living outdoors, in a shelter or area not intended for human habitation for at least a year or on at least four separate occasions in the last three years. To be chronically homeless, the person must also have a diagnosable substance abuse disorder, serious mental health illness, developmental disability, post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from a brain injury, or a chronic physical illness or disability.



Homeless Services

Senior Care Needs

Nursing and assisted living facilities serve aging residents with physical and developmental disabilities, as well as seniors who need assistance with daily living and care. These facilities provide socialization and supervision for these individuals, as well as relief for caregivers who are unable to provide full-time care. As the Westminster community ages, there will be greater demand for these facilities in the city, but like many senior service providers, they are starting to see the need to adapt to different generational preferences.

According to the DRCOG Area Agency on Aging, there are currently 12 nursing and assisted living facilities in Westminster, with the total capacity to serve just over 1,000 residents. As the baby boomer generation starts needing additional services and care, these facilities may see significant demand in service needs. The Housing & Neighborhoods Chapter 7 further describes the need for senior housing and considerations to ensure accessibility from housing to senior services, medical facilities and city services.

Many residents prefer to live in their own homes for as long as possible—to “age in place.” To support older adults and populations with special needs in this pursuit, the city offers the Residential Knox Box Loaner Program. This program provides steel lock boxes to residents to securely contain their house key, allowing the Fire Department access to unlock the house in an emergency situation when the resident may be unable to answer their door.





5.8 GOALS & POLICIES

The following goals and policies provide direction for all aspects of physical planning. Goals are defined as desired ideals and a value to be sought. Policies articulate a course of action that guides governmental decision making to meet the goal. To further define how policies can be implemented in the short- and long-term, specific strategies can be found in the Implementation Action Plan.

RECREATION AND LITERACY



Goal HWS-1 Provide convenient recreational, wellness and literacy opportunities for all Westminster residents.

- 1.1 As new development occurs, evaluate opportunities to contribute to the provision and maintenance of adequate parks, recreation facilities, libraries and open spaces to meet the needs of its new residents and minimize level of service impacts to existing parks, recreation and library facilities.
- 1.2 Encourage design options that allow community gathering spaces in central locations in support of the Neighborhood Unit concept that are capable of supporting cultural and recreational activities appropriate to the area.
- 1.3 Ensure equitable access to recreation, wellness, and literacy through partnerships with Hyland Hills Parks & Recreation District, Jefferson County, and Anythink Libraries.

PARK LAND



Goal HWS-2 Provide new smaller, high quality parks that address the need of high-density and mixed-use developments.

- 2.1 Promote the development of park facilities that encourage pedestrian and bicycle access, provide a range of services and meet the needs of a variety of all ages and abilities.
- 2.2 Plan for new parks and civic spaces in Focus Areas as build out continues that support redevelopment efforts and add to the image of the city.

RELEVANT PLANS

The following plans are incorporated by reference and are not repeated in detail:

- Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan (TBD 2021)
- Arts & Culture Plan
- Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Sustainability Plan
- American with Disabilities Act Transition Plan

CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS



Education



Equity - Diversity and Inclusion



Health



Resilience



Safety



Climate

WELLNESS AND HEALTHY LIVING



Goal HWS-3 Support access to healthy and culturally relevant food and other support services.

- 3.1 Encourage local food production and other supportive actions identified in the Sustainability Plan.
- 3.2 Encourage improved access to healthy foods.
- 3.3 Incentivize urban and suburban agricultural production, green space, gardening, and healthy food outlets in housing developments.

OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS



Goal HWS-4 Ensure access to and maintenance of the city's open space and trails network and preservation of sensitive habitats and environments.

- 4.1 Provide easy and safe access to the city's open space and trail network.
- 4.2 Ensure the city's open space and trails network is well-maintained and continues to preserve sensitive habitats and environments.

ARTS AND CULTURE



Goal HWS-5 Reflect the diversity of the community through public art and cultural programming.

- 5.1 Encourage the appropriate placement of public art, in key public locations, including plazas, gateways into the city, streetscapes and individual developments.
- 5.2 Integrate public art and visually distinct designs into infrastructure that visually connect with nearby districts or neighborhoods.
- 5.3 Promote arts and cultural districts and amenities as destinations.



SCHOOLS



Goal HWS-6 Support access to high quality educational resources and programs for all community members.

- 6.1 Work cooperatively with the local school districts to ensure that sufficient facilities are available to accommodate projected school enrollment in the community.
- 6.2 Continue to work with the school districts to optimize community use of school facilities, including school playgrounds and sports facilities as well as auditoriums or cafeterias to host community meetings.
- 6.3 Encourage collaboration between the city and school districts to support enrichment activities and mentorship/internship programs for students.

PUBLIC SAFETY



Goal HWS-7 Maintain a safe, secure community with high quality police, fire, and emergency services.

- 7.1 Continue to provide response to all emergencies and achieve response time goals set by each department.
- 7.2 Support community involvement in emergency preparation and response through business and resident outreach efforts.
- 7.3 Ensure current and future residential, employment and visitor populations are adequately served.
- 7.4 Coordinate with Police during development reviews to ensure the environmental and structural design is advantageous for crime prevention and not a hindrance to police response.
- 7.5 Continue working to improve efficiency and interoperability for police and fire services with other local jurisdictions.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Goal HWS-8 Promote exceptional public health and assistance programs to support residents with financial, social, physical, and wellness needs.

- 8.1 Coordinate across city departments, programs, and facilities for efficiency and effectiveness of community services.
- 8.2 Connect community members with city and external resources through information distribution, especially focused on minority populations with cultural or language barriers.
- 8.3 Maintain and expand access to homeless services through partnerships with other governmental entities and non-profits that provide access to supportive services as well as temporary sheltering and permanent housing.



6.0

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

The land use designations and allowable densities reflected in the Comprehensive Plan play a direct role in the current and long-term economic and fiscal health of the city. Without a balanced and diversified mix of land uses and densities, the city cannot facilitate the type of activities necessary to accommodate continued economic growth and fiscal sustainability.

The purpose of this chapter is to articulate key economic and fiscal considerations in establishing land use objectives, while also providing summary economic and tax data as context for goal setting. The chapter concludes with identification of planning issues related to economic growth and fiscal sustainability, leading to specific Comprehensive Plan goals and policies that can be used in establishing direction for land use planning consistent with the city's vision and goals.

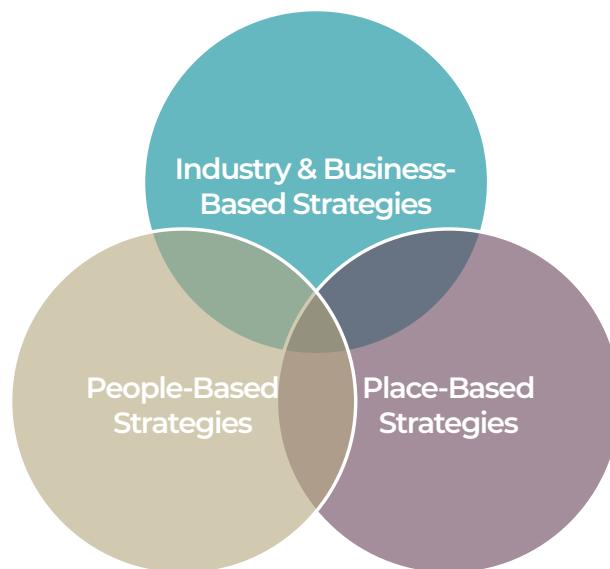


Circle Point Offices

OVERVIEW

Economic Development in Westminster is a practice that integrates business-, people-, and place-based strategies to expand the wealth of the community and create opportunities for residents and businesses to thrive. The focus on maintaining a vital and sustainable economy includes efforts to attract, retain, and expand businesses, with attention to primary employment and diversification of industry sectors to increase economic resiliency. The city also tracks metrics related to housing needs and workforce development in order to make strategic programming and project development decisions that support a balanced and inclusive community. Understanding the importance of placemaking in the attraction of both employers and the workforce, the city dedicates staffing and financial resources toward revitalization and redevelopment activities, particularly in focus and transition areas more fully described in Chapter 2 – Community Places.

It is important to accurately describe the different but related concepts of resiliency and sustainability to inform policies and strategies in setting goals and objectives at the conclusion of this chapter. Economic resiliency is defined as the policy-induced ability of an economy to withstand or recover from the effects of shocks arising from economic vulnerability or exposure, such as the impacts of public policy induced economic impacts of COVID-19. Economic sustainability refers to practices that support long-term economic growth without negatively impacting current or long-term social, environmental, or cultural aspects of the community. It is the ability of an economy to support a defined level of economic production indefinitely. Similarly, fiscal sustainability describes an organization's practices that support the ability to balance ongoing service needs into the future with corresponding levels of revenue.





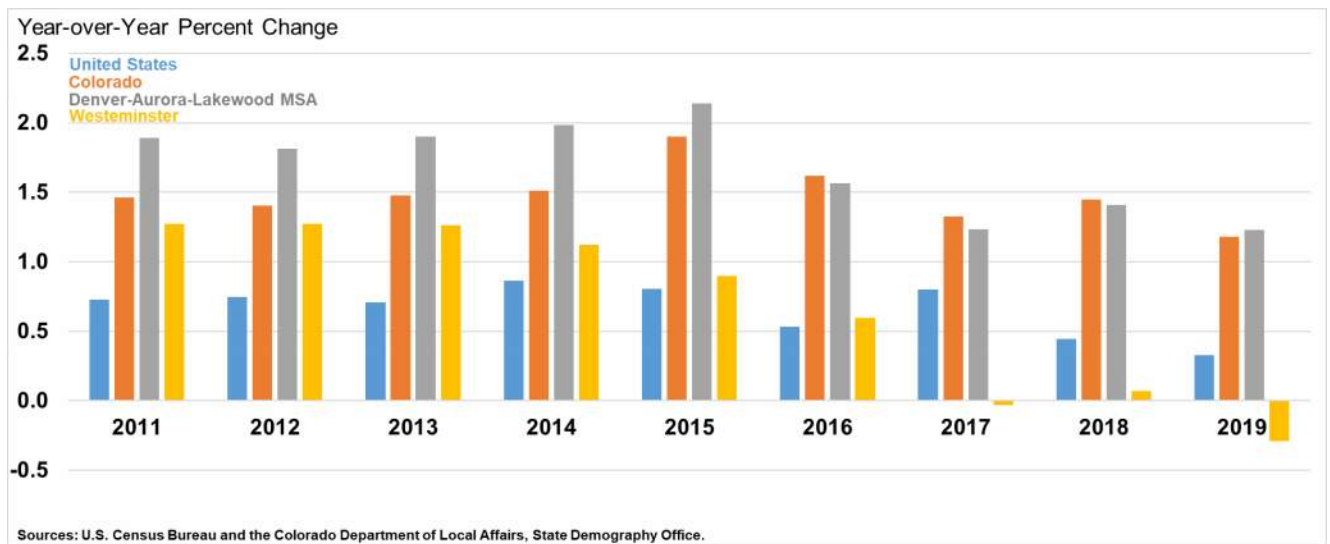
6.1 ECONOMIC CHARACTER & TRENDS

In 2020, the city's Economic Development Department contracted with the Business Research Division from the Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado Boulder. This section directly incorporates data and analysis from their December 2020 draft report.

POPULATION

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs, State Demography Office, estimated Westminster's population at 113,191 in 2019. The majority of Westminster's population is in Adams County (61%) with the remainder in Jefferson County. Population growth in the city averaged 0.7% since 2010. This compares to average population growth of 1.8% in the Denver MSA, 1.6% in Colorado, and 0.7% growth nationally over the same period. It is interesting to note estimated population declines in 2017 and 2019.

Chart 6-1. Population Growth, 2011-2019

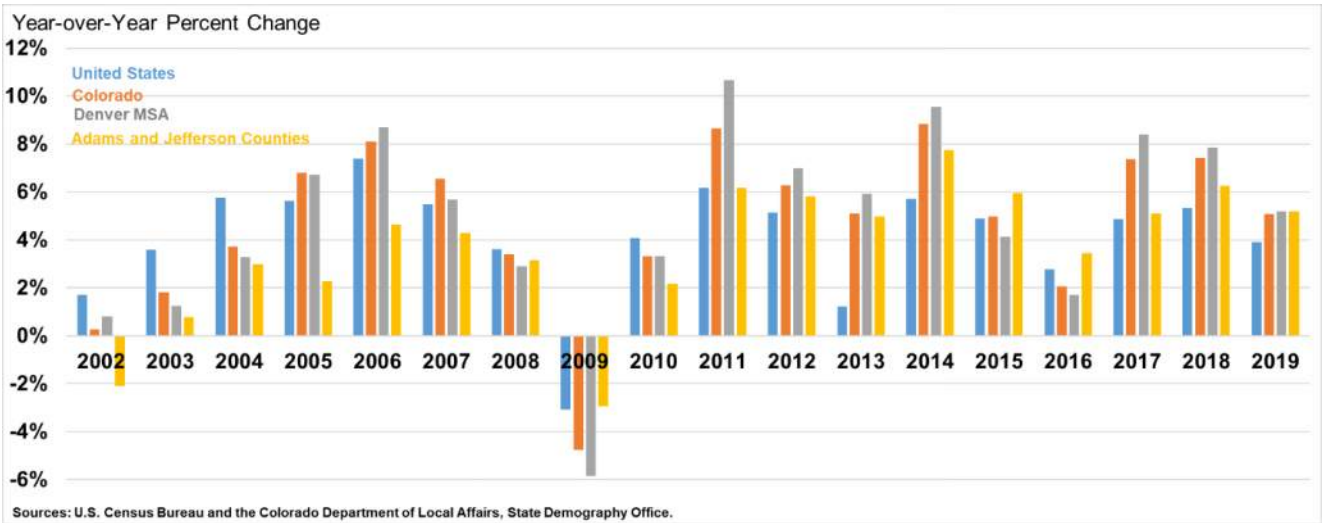


Source: Business Research Division, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado Boulder – City of Westminster Employment Study, 2020.

PERSONAL INCOME

Like GDP and population, growth in personal income in the Denver MSA and in Adams and Jefferson counties (the two primary Westminster counties) have outperformed national personal income growth since 2009, but underperformed the nation from 2001 to 2009. From 2009-2019, personal income in Adams and Jefferson counties combined grew 67.2% compared to just 13.6% from 2001-2009. In 2019, personal income in the two counties totaled \$62 billion, growing 5.2%. Per capita personal income totaled \$56,360 in 2019 (compared to \$56,490 nationally, \$61,157 in Colorado, and \$ 67,236 in the Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA), growing 5.1% in 2018 and 4.3% in 2019. Emblematic of the metropolitan commuting patterns and labor shed, Adams County recorded a \$4.5 million outflow of personal income from the adjustment for residence, while Jefferson County recorded a \$6 billion inflow in 2019, indicating a propensity to commute out of Jefferson County for employment.

Chart 6-2. Personal Income Growth, 2002-2019



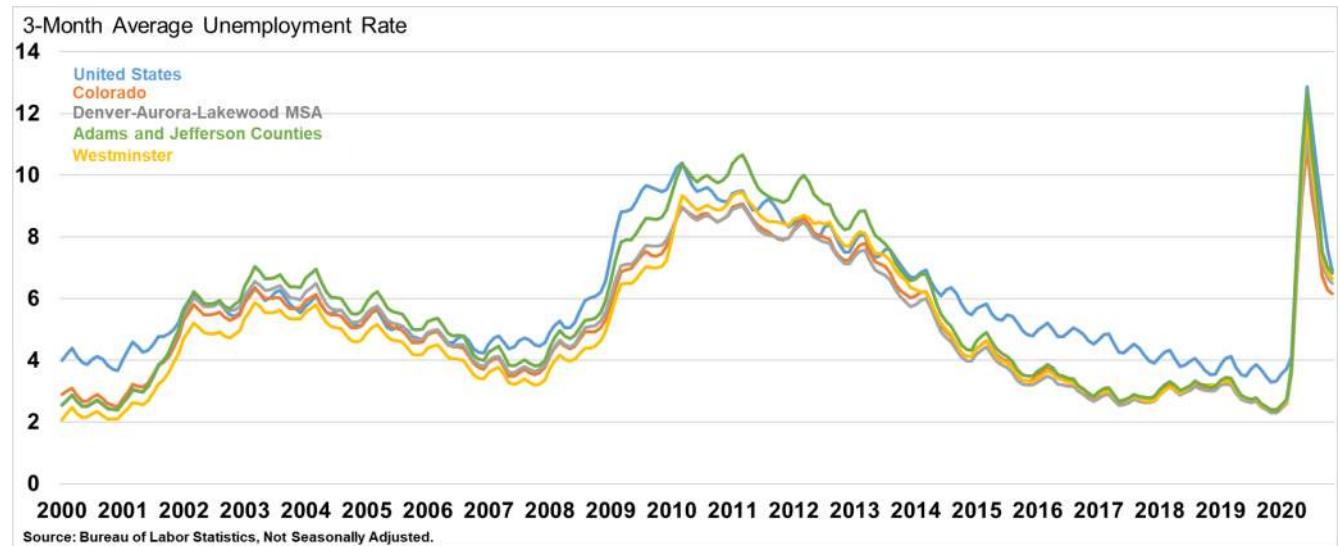
Source: Business Research Division, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado Boulder – City of Westminster Employment Study, 2020.



UNEMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rate, based on a household survey of residents, shows that Colorado, the Denver MSA, and the City of Westminster tend to sustain unemployment rates below the national average. For the 12 months ending in November 2020, the national rate was 7.6% compared to 6.2% in Colorado, 6.5% in the Denver MSA, 6.8% in the combined Adams and Jefferson counties, and 6.6% in Westminster. For the month of November (not seasonally adjusted), the Westminster rate was 6.7% (same at the 12-month average).

Chart 6-3. Unemployment Rate, 2000-2020



Source: Business Research Division, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado Boulder – City of Westminster Employment Study, 2020.

EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRY

In the City of Westminster, 58.2% of employment and 46% of wages are concentrated in five industries: Retail Trade is the largest employer with 14.6% of employment, followed by Accommodation and Food Service (14.1%), Health Care and Social Assistance (12.5%), Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (9.8%), and Government (7.2%).

The Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services sector represented the largest share of firms in the City of Westminster in 2019 with 17.7%, followed by Health Care and Social Assistance (10.2%), Accommodation and Food Services (9.5%), and Other Services (7.5%). The Wholesale Trade industry paid the highest average annual wages (\$134,968), followed by Management of Companies and Enterprises (\$126,235), and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (\$100,283).

Table 6-1. Westminster Employment, Firms, and Wages, 2019

NAICS	Industry	Firms	Average Employment	% of Employment	Average Wages
11	Agriculture	ND	ND	ND	ND
21	Mining	ND	ND	ND	ND
22	Utilities	ND	ND	ND	ND
23	Construction	210	2,996	6.1%	\$70,671
31-33	Manufacturing	68	2,540	5.2%	\$103,811
42	Wholesale Trade	189	2,003	4.1%	\$134,968
44-45	Retail Trade	304	7,139	14.6%	\$28,694
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	44	193	0.4%	\$46,126
51	Information	62	2,192	4.5%	\$101,108
52	Finance and Insurance	200	2,116	4.3%	\$66,603
53	Real Estate, Rental, Leasing	157	800	1.6%	\$46,196
54	Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	514	4,774	9.8%	\$100,283
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	52	1,286	2.6%	\$126,235
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management	152	3,257	6.7%	\$35,078
61	Education Services	68	532	1.1%	\$37,624
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	297	6,132	12.5%	\$47,527
71	Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	43	1,240	2.5%	\$20,285
72	Accommodation and Food Services	276	6,888	14.1%	\$23,506
81	Other Services	218	1,115	2.3%	\$35,755
99	Unclassified	36	162	0.3%	\$38,688
Govt	Government	13	3,521	7.2%	\$53,234
Total	All	2,905	48,917	100.0%	\$58,582

Source: Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, QCEW. Values not shown for Ag, Mining, and Utilities due to nondisclosures.

Source: Business Research Division, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado Boulder – City of Westminster Employment Study, 2020.



2020 EMPLOYMENT CHANGE

Total employment in the City of Westminster fell an estimated 13.5% (-6,591 jobs) year-over-year in Q2 2020, compared to a decline of 5.4% in Adams County, 9.4% in Jefferson County, and 11% in Colorado. The larger employment loss in Westminster reflects the city's larger share of Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Services employment, which were two industries heavily impacted by the pandemic induced recession. The steepest decline in employment in the city was observed in April when an estimated 7,400 jobs were lost from March; however, approximately 57.4% of jobs lost have been recovered as of June. The number of firms in the city increased 3.9% year-over-year in Q2 2020, mainly due to increases in the latter half of 2019, as the number of firms was relatively unchanged (0.3%) from Q1 2020. Average wages in Westminster increased 11.9% year-over-year in Q2 2020, as the COVID-19 recession impacted low-wage workers the most, thus artificially increasing the average. This compares to an 8.7% year-over-year increase in average wages for Colorado.

Table 6-2. Westminster Employment Change, Q2 2020 Year-Over-Year

NAICS	Industry	Employment Change	%	Firms (% Change)	Average Wages (% Change)
11	Agriculture	-	-	-	-
21	Mining	-	-	-	-
22	Utilities	-	-	-	-
23	Construction	-50	-1.7%	3.4%	6.9%
31-33	Manufacturing	183	7.3%	-1.5%	-3.0%
42	Wholesale Trade	102	5.1%	9.5%	-20.0%
44-45	Retail Trade	-1,204	-16.9%	-4.5%	9.0%
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	-21	-10.9%	-11.1%	7.9%
51	Information	-48	-2.2%	16.1%	2.3%
52	Finance and Insurance	-140	-6.6%	3.5%	40.7%
53	Real Estate, Rental, Leasing	-69	-8.7%	10.5%	18.2%
54	Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	-263	-5.5%	6.3%	16.1%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	-21	-1.6%	16.3%	-0.1%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management	-1,222	-37.4%	13.3%	18.8%
61	Education Services	-97	-18.0%	-4.3%	13.8%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	-241	-3.9%	5.8%	4.1%
71	Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	-760	-60.0%	9.3%	28.2%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	-2,420	-34.7%	2.9%	-2.9%
81	Other Services	-150	-13.6%	4.3%	5.1%
Govt	Government	-123	-3.4%	0.0%	7.9%
Total	All	-6,591	-13.5%	3.9%	11.9%

Source: Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, QCEW.

Source: Business Research Division, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado Boulder – City of Westminster Employment Study, 2020.

5-YEAR EMPLOYMENT CHANGE BY INDUSTRY

The City of Westminster has added an estimated 8,721 jobs from 2014-2019, for a five-year compound annual growth rate of 4%, and 169 firms, for a five-year compound annual growth rate of 1.2%. Industries with the most gains over the five-year period were Construction (1,621 net jobs; 16.9%); Accommodation and Food Services (1,180 net jobs; 3.8%), and Health Care and Social Assistance (968 net jobs; 3.5%). The two industries that observed job losses were Educational Services (-164 jobs; -5.2%) and Agriculture. From 2014-2019, the Management of Companies and Enterprises sector observed the largest average wage gains in absolute change, while the Construction sector observed the largest percentage change.

Table 6-3. Westminster Employment Data (QCEW), 2019

NAICS	INDUSTRY	EMPLOYMENT 5-YEAR CHANGE	EMPLOYMENT 5-YEAR CAGR	EMPLOYMENT LQ	2019 AVERAGE WAGES	AVERAGE WAGES REAL CHANGE	WAGES 5-YEAR CAGR	FIRMS 5-YEAR CHANGE	FIRMS 5-YEAR CAGR
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
21	Mining	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
22	Utilities	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
23	Construction	1,621	16.9%	1.22	\$70,671	\$13,449	21.9%	11	1.1%
31-33	Manufacturing	719	6.9%	0.60	\$103,811	-\$8,395	5.2%	13	4.3%
42	Wholesale Trade	610	7.5%	1.03	\$134,968	\$29,569	13.0%	6	0.6%
44-45	Retail Trade	146	0.4%	1.39	\$28,694	\$4,600	4.0%	6	0.4%
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	18	2.0%	0.11	\$46,126	\$13,599	9.3%	(2)	-0.7%
51	Information	532	5.7%	2.33	\$101,108	\$18,674	10.1%	20	8.0%
52	Finance and Insurance	60	0.6%	1.06	\$66,603	\$12,957	5.0%	(22)	-2.0%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	208	6.2%	1.06	\$46,196	\$8,053	10.3%	(1)	-0.1%
54	Professional and Technical Services	851	4.0%	1.51	\$100,283	\$5,865	5.3%	22	0.9%
55	Management Of Companies and Enterprises	487	10.0%	1.62	\$126,235	\$29,990	16.1%	25	13.8%
56	Administrative and Waste Services	769	5.5%	1.06	\$35,078	\$7,623	10.8%	(23)	-2.7%
61	Educational Services	(164)	-5.2%	0.55	\$37,624	\$10,306	1.0%	(1)	-0.3%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	968	3.5%	0.92	\$47,527	\$4,963	5.8%	24	1.7%
71	Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	285	5.4%	1.55	\$20,285	\$4,110	10.2%	5	2.5%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	1,180	3.8%	1.49	\$23,506	\$5,128	9.1%	30	2.3%
81	Other Services	12	0.2%	0.74	\$35,755	\$9,128	6.3%	26	2.6%
Gov't	Government	258	1.5%	0.49	\$53,234	\$10,251	6.0%	-	0.0%
Total	All	8,721	4.0%	1.00	\$58,582	\$10,707	4.1%	169	1.2%

Source: Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, QCEW. Values not shown for Ag, Mining, and Utilities due to nondisclosures.

Note: Public education is counted in Government, while private education is counted in Educational Services.

Source: Business Research Division, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado Boulder – City of Westminster Employment Study, 2020.



TOP 20 FIRMS IN WESTMINSTER

The top five employers in the City of Westminster accounted for 9.8% of city employment in 2019, while the top 50 accounted for 37.9%, and the top 100 accounted for 48.8%. The top 20 primary employers in the City of Westminster in 2019 include companies in Software, Healthcare, Education, Marketing, and Communications. Primary employers include Ball Aerospace & Technologies, Front Range Community College, and VMware. Primary employers are industries that produce more goods and services than can be consumed in the local economy, and therefore, export a significant portion of them.

Table 6-4. Westminster Top 20 Primary Employers, 2019

Company	Product/Service
Ball Aerospace & Technologies	Aerospace Systems & Software
Catholic Health Initiatives	Healthcare
Trimble Navigation	Software
Front Range Community College	Education
Vertafore	Software
DigitalGlobe	Information
ADS Alliance Data Systems	Marketing
Epsilon Data Management	Marketing
MTech Mechanical	Construction Contractor
Aerotek	Staffing
LGS Innovations	Technology
ReedGroup	Management
Sunrun	Solar
Datalogix	Data
SpotXchange, Inc.	Digital Media Advertising
Devereux Colorado Community Health	Healthcare
Kaiser	Healthcare
American Renal Associates	Healthcare
Motorola Solutions	Communications Equipment
Coalfire Systems	IT

Source: Business Research Division, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado Boulder – City of Westminster Employment Study, 2020.



Trimble Offices



Retail Trade industry employs the most workers in Westminster

FIRMS BY INDUSTRY AND FIRM SIZE

Firms with less than 20 employees represented 21.6% of the total share of employment for Westminster in 2019. Firms with less than 100 employees represented 52.8% of total employment.

Table 6-5. Westminster Industry Total Employment by Firm Size, 2019

NAICS	Industry	1-19	20+	Total
11	Agriculture	ND	ND	ND
21	Mining	ND	ND	ND
22	Utilities	ND	ND	ND
23	Construction	583	2,413	2,996
31-33	Manufacturing	270	2,270	2,540
42	Wholesale Trade	480	1,523	2,003
44-45	Retail Trade	1,530	5,609	7,139
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	146	46	193
51	Information	159	2,032	2,192
52	Finance and Insurance	771	1,345	2,116
53	Real Estate, Rental, Leasing	475	325	800
54	Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	1,339	3,434	4,774
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	156	1,130	1,286
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management	509	2,748	3,257
61	Education Services	284	248	532
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	1,219	4,913	6,132
71	Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	229	1,011	1,240
72	Accommodation and Food Services	1,523	5,365	6,888
81	Other Services	778	336	1,115
Govt	Government	12	3,509	3,521
Total	All	10,602	38,314	48,917

Note: Figures have not been disclosed for Ag, Mining, and Utilities for the city of Westminster given the small number of employers in these industries. Source: Business Research Division, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado Boulder – City of Westminster Employment Study, 2020.

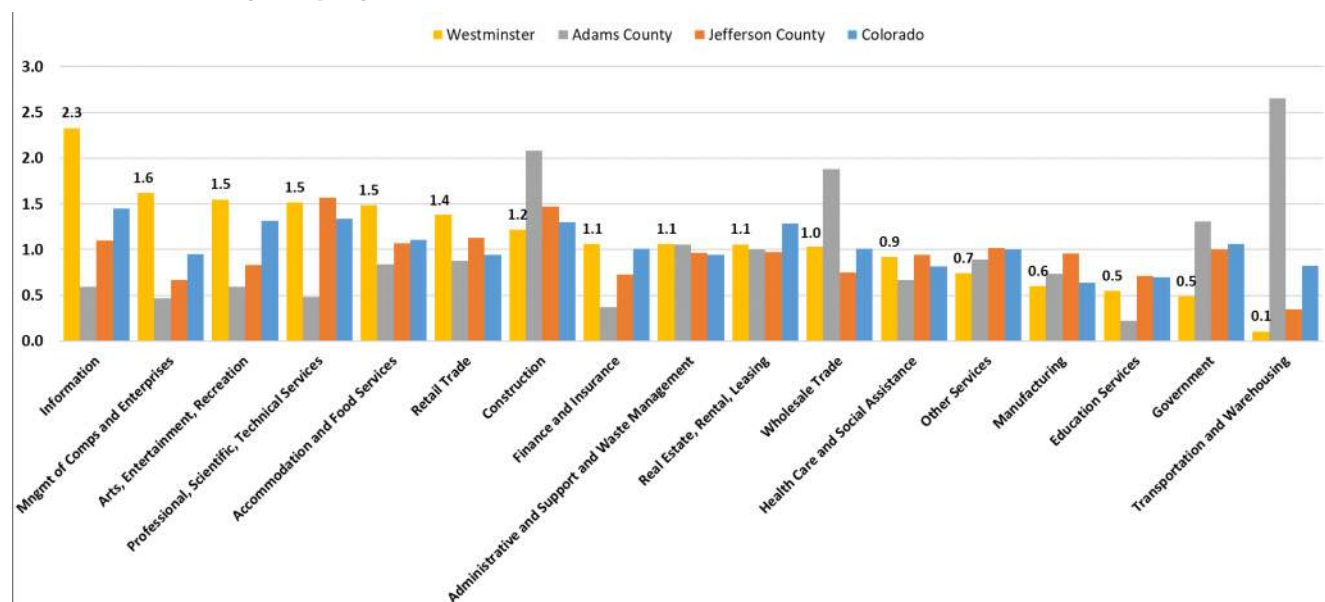


INDUSTRY CONCENTRATION

A location quotient is a useful tool for analyzing an industry's clustering in a given geographical area. Interestingly, the City of Westminster, Adams County, and Jefferson County have much different industry clusters. In 2019, there were 11 industries in the City of Westminster with a greater concentration of industry employment compared to the nation; these are identified in the chart below with a location quotient >1.0 . A location quotient of 1.0 indicates the study area has the same concentration of industry employment as the nation, and a location quotient of <1.0 indicates the area has a smaller industry concentration than the nation.

The top industry concentration by location quotient in Westminster in 2019 was Information with a location quotient of 2.27, or in other words, Westminster has a 127% stronger relative concentration of Information employees than the nation. Information employment in Adams County was much less concentrated than the nation, while Information employment in Jefferson County was roughly the same as the national average, and Information employment in Colorado was much higher than the nation. The top industry concentration by location quotient for Adams County in 2019 was Transportation and Warehousing, while Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services was the top industry in Jefferson County.

Chart 6-4. Westminster, Adams County, Jefferson County, and Colorado Industry Employment Locations Quotients, 2019



Source: Business Research Division, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado Boulder – City of Westminster Employment Study, 2020.

Table 6-6. Job Count by Places Where Workers within Westminster Live, 2018

Place	Count	Share
Denver	6,084	11.9%
Westminster	5,956	11.7%
Thornton	4,569	9.0%
Arvada	3,239	6.3%
Broomfield	2,601	5.1%
Aurora	2,508	4.9%
Lakewood	1,479	2.9%
Northglenn	1,381	2.7%
Colorado Springs	984	1.9%
Longmont	976	1.9%
Other	21,236	41.6%
Total	51,013	100%

Table 6-7. Job Count by Places Where Westminster Residents are Employed, 2018

Place	Count	Share
Denver	14,545	23.7%
Westminster	5,956	9.7%
Thornton	3,778	6.2%
Arvada	3,772	6.2%
Broomfield	3,588	5.9%
Aurora	2,574	4.2%
Lakewood	2,421	3.9%
Northglenn	1,662	2.7%
Colorado Springs	1,548	2.5%
Longmont	1,165	1.9%
Other	20,291	33.1%
Total	61,300	100%

Source: Business Research Division, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado Boulder – City of Westminster Employment Study, 2020.

LABOR SHED

Interrelated factors—such as land use policies, housing availability, transportation accessibility, real estate occupancy costs, tax rates, economic development policy and programs—all influence the extent to which a community can attract and retain primary jobs. The quality and quantity of the available workforce also affects the prospects for economic development. The specific characteristics of the labor pool influence the kinds of businesses that can successfully operate at a given location, such as educational level, skill mix, and income range.

Analyzing where workers within the City of Westminster work and where they live helps to determine where the labor market draws its commuting workers. OnTheMap from the U.S. Census Bureau provides data on commuting patterns for areas within the U.S., including data on workers employed in the area but live outside, workers who live in the area but are employed outside, and workers who are both employed and live in the area.

In 2018, 45,057 people (88.3%) were employed in the City of Westminster but lived outside of the city, suggesting a very high commuting rate into the city for work. Only 5,956 employees both lived and worked in the city. The largest share of workers commuting into the City of Westminster live in Denver, accounting for 11.9% of city workers, followed by Thornton (9%), Arvada (6.3%), Broomfield (5.1%), and Aurora (4.9%). Additionally, 55,344 people (90.3%) who lived in the City of Westminster commuted outside of the city for work. The largest share of workers who live in the City of Westminster but commute outside of the city for work are employed in Denver (23.7%), followed by Boulder (6.2%), Lakewood (6.2%), Broomfield (5.9%), and Aurora (4.2%). These commuting patterns have been relatively the same over the last five years.

BALANCE OF JOBS TO RESIDENTS

A healthy balance of residents and jobs is part of the **Managed Growth** and **Great Neighborhoods** guiding principles of this Plan. The relationship between jobs and employed residents indicates whether a city has a deficit or surplus of jobs relative to employed residents. A balance between the two would be a 1:1 ratio and would indicate that in-commuting and out-commuting are matched, leading to efficient use of the transportation system, particularly during peak hours. As of 2018, the city's ratio was an estimated 0.83 jobs to employed residents (reflecting approximately 50,952 jobs and 61,388 employed residents in the city). This is similar to both Adams and Jefferson counties; however, Denver has a significantly higher ratio of 1.32 jobs to employed residents reflecting the significant in-migration of commuters from outlying communities. This is a common pattern in a metropolitan region with a central city and suburban areas.

Westminster and neighboring communities effectively function as one regional employment and housing market area to varying degrees. Significant flows of labor across municipal borders occur in many directions. Table 6-8 shows how no single community is balanced 1:1 in this regard.



While the jobs to employed residents ratio appears stable in terms of total numbers, almost three-quarters of jobs in Westminster are held by non-residents. Fewer than 21% of employed Westminster residents hold jobs within the city, and the remaining 79% of working residents travel outside of the city for work.

Table 6-8. Regional Comparison of Jobs to Employed Residents

Place of Comparison	Jobs	Employed Residents	Jobs/Emp. Residents
City of Westminster	50,952	61,388	0.83
City of Arvada	31,264	63,050	0.50
City and County of Broomfield	38,120	36,290	1.05
City of Thornton	27,263	70,558	0.39
City and County of Denver	504,993	382,460	1.32
Adams County	215,659	251,973	0.86
Jefferson County	238,252	308,470	0.77

Source: DRCOG 2018 estimates for jobs; American Community Survey 2018 5-yr estimates for Employed Residents

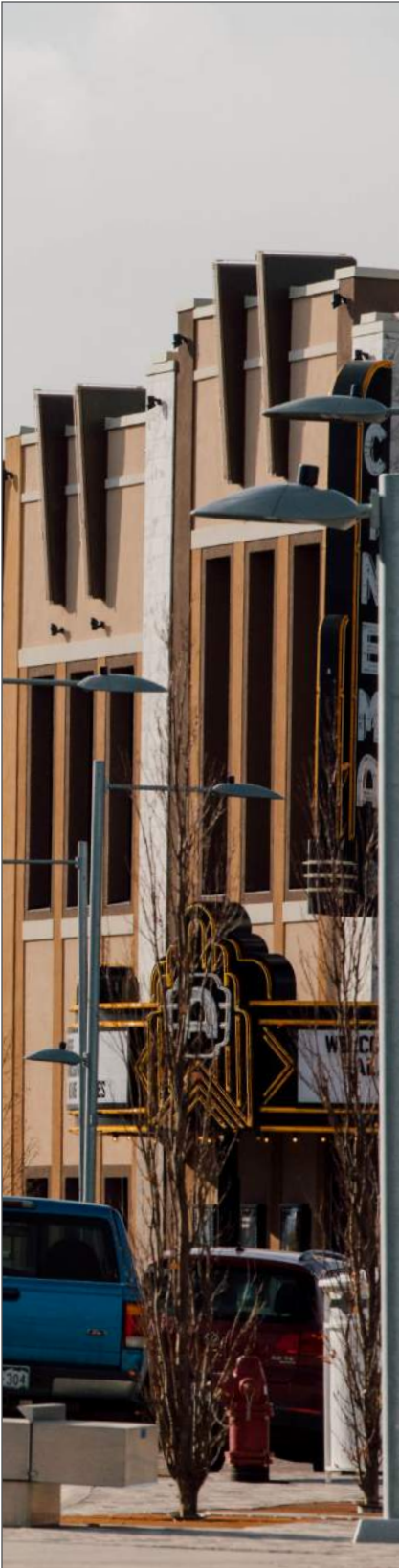
A similar metric, jobs to housing units, shows a relationship that will vary given differences among communities in labor force, social and economic characteristics, transportation linkages, geographical constraints, and political factors. Westminster is characterized by a higher number of non-retail jobs per housing unit than the neighboring communities of Thornton and Arvada. Thornton and Arvada both represent a large source of labor for employers located in Westminster—only Denver represents a larger source of “in-commuters” into the City of Westminster.

Communities elsewhere in the primary market area, such as Broomfield, are characterized by higher jobs-to-housing ratios: Areas with significantly higher jobs-to-housing ratios do not have an adequate amount of housing supply to meet the needs of the local work force. Such areas must import a higher proportion of labor which, all else being equal, tends to generate greater levels of traffic congestion that result from patterns of in-commuting and higher costs of housing.

Although a considerable number of workers do commute for jobs located in Westminster, the city does not currently have the challenges often associated with a disproportionately inadequate supply of local housing relative to local jobs. The 2020 Westminster Business Survey identified challenges finding qualified employees as one of the highest concerns for business owners and managers. A subset of this concern was the availability of employee housing with 57% of business owners and managers concerned about a lack of affordable rental properties, long commutes to and from affordable housing, and also for employees who live with family or friends to save on housing costs. 20% indicated concern that



Orchard Town Center is a regional commercial destination.



Alamo Drafthouse Downtown

one or more of their employees was at risk of becoming homeless. It is recognized that recent housing challenges in Westminster are part of a regional issue, facing all communities across Metro Denver.

VACANCY RATES

Tables 9 through 12 provide 5-year data on commercial real estate by square footage, type and year. The tables also provide vacancy rates by year. Very little new office or retail space has been constructed since 2015. In addition, the vacancy rates have been relatively stable, generally ranging from 8% to 9%. Significant new industrial space has been added; however, industrial/flex space remains the smallest of the three commercial real estate classes.

Table 6-9. Five-Year Vacancy Rates by Category

Period	Vacant Office (percent of total)	Vacant Retail (percent of total)	Vacant Industrial & Flex (percent of total)
2020 EST	9.3%	9.3%	4.7%
2020 YTD	8.9%	8.8%	4.4%
2019	10.9%	7.2%	4.5%
2018	9.3%	7.0%	7.8%
2017	8.8%	6.9%	4.3%
2016	8.4%	8.1%	4.2%
2015	9.4%	8.1%	7.9%

Source: CoStar

Table 6-10. Five-Year Vacancy Rates for Office Uses

Period	Inventory Bldgs	Inventory SF	Vacant SF Total	Vacant Percent Total
2020 EST	-	6,335,872	592,174	9.3%
2020 YTD	190	6,335,872	566,636	8.9%
2019	186	6,277,665	681,836	10.9%
2018	186	6,277,665	583,322	9.3%
2017	185	6,152,665	543,516	8.8%
2016	186	6,185,817	516,960	8.4%
2015	183	6,074,073	568,442	9.4%

Source: CoStar



Table 6-11. Five-Year Vacancy Rates for Retail Uses

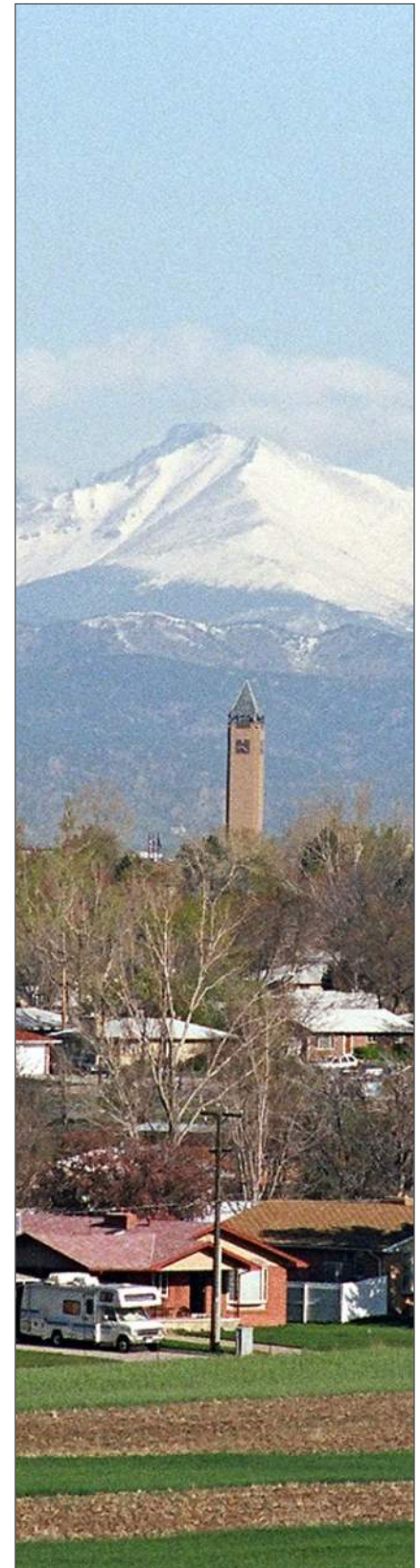
Period	Inventory Bldgs	Inventory SF	Vacant SF Total	Vacant Percent Total
2020 EST	-	8,942,532	827,310	9.3%
2020 YTD	450	8,942,532	782,888	8.8%
2019	450	8,942,532	641,511	7.2%
2018	444	8,942,335	626,025	7.0%
2017	438	8,907,851	618,539	6.9%
2016	426	8,807,632	713,906	8.1%
2015	418	8,712,223	703,097	8.1%

Source: CoStar

Table 6-12. Five-Year Vacancy Rates for Industrial/Flex Uses

Period	Inventory Bldgs	Inventory SF	Vacant SF Total	Vacant Percent Total
2020 EST	-	3,778,187	179,401	4.7%
2020 YTD	126	3,778,187	165,483	4.4%
2019	126	3,778,187	170,420	4.5%
2018	124	3,618,083	281,445	7.8%
2017	117	3,151,802	134,576	4.3%
2016	116	3,135,762	131,690	4.2%
2015	116	3,131,537	248,447	7.9%

Source: CoStar



View from Westminister Heights



6.2 FISCAL CHARACTER AND TRENDS

One of the city's strategic goals includes being a financially sustainable government providing excellence in city services. Financial sustainability is essential for the City of Westminster because the city's General Fund is primarily dependent upon a single revenue source: sales and use taxes. National and local economic growth go through cycles that impact tax collections at a local level, and Westminster needs to be prepared to both weather economic downturns and take advantage of economic upturns.

In anticipation of future economic changes, the city has been proactive reviewing revenue opportunities and building up cash reserves. Even amidst the revenue growth and careful planning, tremendous financial demands exist to address aging infrastructure through repair and replacement projects while demand for city services continue. These trends illustrate the need for careful planning and innovative funding approaches to sustain the city's fiscal position in the future in order to continue meeting these community expectations and remain a municipal leader.

Coming out of the Great Recession of late 2007 through 2009, the city made great strides creating and expanding reserves including a General Fund Reserve and General Fund Stabilization Reserve. Simultaneously, efforts were made to diversify the sales tax base with further development across the city in locations such as Orchard Town Center, The Promenade and Shops at Walnut Creek, Downtown Westminster, and Westminster Station. The financial rebound from the Great Recession was protracted over a period of several years.

More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic was an event that unexpectedly and abruptly impacted revenue coming into the city. The city has demonstrated resilience and the ability to navigate the financial challenges caused by the pandemic with both prudent management of staff resources and capital projects, as well as the administration of federal assistance funds to the community. Significant impacts to municipal revenues are expected to occur in the near-term (2020-2021), but econometric models indicate that fiscal health is expected to normalize quickly after the pandemic. Nevertheless, the long-lasting effects of the pandemic on society and consumer behaviors may be more evident in the composition of industry sectors that collect and remit taxes to the city. These impacts will be more closely tracked and managed through strategic plans and annual work plans that are more immediate in nature than the Comprehensive Plan.

In 2018, the city conducted a financial sustainability study that identified a potential structural imbalance where expenses were projected to eventually outpace revenues, assuming no



changes in current city operations or revenue structure. Key recommendations resulting from the 2018 study include:

1. Pursue revenue-generating options in order to ensure funding sufficiency to properly maintain critical infrastructure and to maintain service delivery levels;
2. Explore revenue-generating options for purposes of diversifying the city's revenue structure and reduce the reliance on sales and use taxes, a variable revenue source that is susceptible to business cycles;
3. Evaluate city services, including an analysis of core services compared to additional services; and
4. Develop and periodically update a resilient, long-range financial projection as part of its standard business practices.

Meeting these recommendations is achievable, but will take intentional effort and disciplined decision making. As part of long-range financial planning efforts, ongoing communication is necessary to maintain a long-term perspective and clearly understand how today's actions may affect the city years into the future. Integral to long-range financial planning efforts is a focus on coordinated financial policy development, including those that inform reserve levels and debt issuance.

ECONOMETRIC MODELING AND TAX PROJECTIONS

In 2020, the city's Economic Development Department contracted with the Business Research Division (BRD) from the Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado Boulder. This section directly incorporates data and analysis from their December 2020 draft report. The BRD created an econometrically derived tax forecast for the City of Westminster to provide tax estimates for the five-year horizon ending in 2025. The five revenue sources the BRD projected include grocery sales, restaurant sales, nongrocery sales, general merchandise sales, automobile use, construction use, other use, and property.

Forecasts of the national indicators that are needed to drive the state and local (Westminster) forecasts are from Moody's Analytics. Under Moody's Scenario 2 that was used to generate the Westminster Baseline scenario, U.S. real GDP is expected to decrease by 3.5% in 2020, but rebound 3.4% in 2021, with moderate to strong growth throughout the rest of the forecast horizon. Job growth remains stalled in 2021 in this scenario, but begins to rebound in 2022, and personal income follows suit.

Totaling the eight revenue sources analyzed by the BRD for the City of Westminster under the Baseline scenario, collections are forecasted to fall by 4.1% in 2020, but grow 5.2% in 2021. Sales tax revenues account for three-quarters of the total, so that the growth patterns in sales tax revenues and the total are similar. The slower growth rate for the total in 2020 is largely due to the decrease in restaurant and general merchandise sales, as well as a sharp drop





Bradburn Village commercial

in use taxes. The eight revenue components combine for a total of \$89 million in 2020 and \$93.6 million in 2021. For the remaining years of the medium-term forecast, total revenue growth is expected to accelerate with growth rates above 4% in every year from 2022 to 2025. By 2025, total collections are predicted to reach \$112.8 million, which is 21.6% higher than in 2019.

SALES TAX REVENUES

As shown in Figure 5, some sources of sales tax revenues, such as those from eating and drinking places, show patterns over the past year that depart substantially from other revenue sources, and their trajectories in the future are also likely to differ from those of other components as well. Forecasts are likely to be more accurate and also more informative if the components with unusual recent patterns are modeled and forecasted individually. In particular, separate equations are built into the model for sales tax revenues from eating and drinking places, from food and beverage stores, and for general merchandise, leaving all other sources as a fourth component. General merchandise appears to follow patterns somewhat similar to the fourth component, but there is still some advantage to allowing flexibility in modeling this very large source of revenues.

Under the Baseline scenario the Westminster revenue model predicts that the city will finish 2020 with total sales tax revenues down by 3.1% from 2019 at \$66.4 million. The second quarter is responsible for most of this decline with a 16.3% drop from the first quarter, followed by a strong 19.3% rebound in the third quarter. For the final quarter of 2020, total sales tax collections are expected to decline by 3.7%. Not surprisingly, revenues from eating and drinking establishments suffer the largest percentage decline for the year at -19.1%, while revenues from grocery and beverage stores gained 9.5% over 2019 collections.

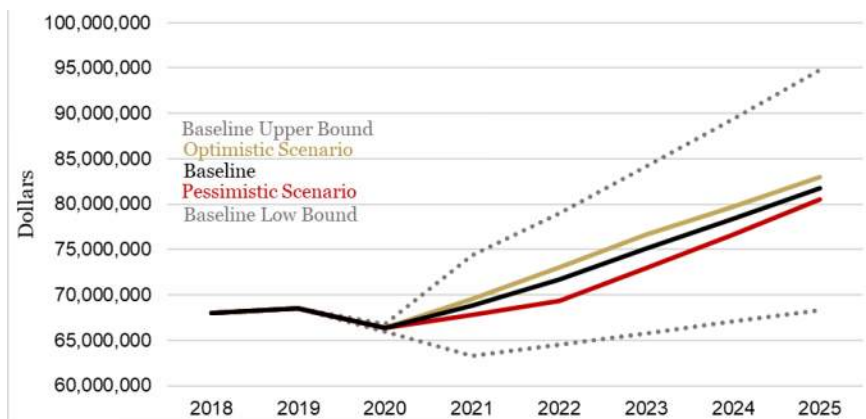
Looking towards 2021 the model anticipates a moderate recovery with 3.7% growth in total sales tax revenues, driven by a strong rise in collections from restaurants and bars (+9.6%) and moderate growth in the other primary components of sales tax revenues. This will place total sales tax revenues for 2021 at \$68.9 million, which is within one-half percent of 2019 collections. With recovery by 2021 to the previous 2019 peak, the impact of the pandemic-induced recession on City of Westminster sales tax revenues is short lived. However, the strong 9.6% growth in revenues from eating and drinking places cannot offset the sharper decline of 2020, and this revenue source remains below its 2019 peak until 2023.

From 2022 through 2025, sales taxes will continue to rise at fairly steady rates ranging between four and five percent annual growth in each year. This reflects the steady, moderate growth in Colorado retail sales in the four to five percent range over this period. No residual effects of the pandemic appear in these medium-term forecasts with solid improvement in Colorado labor markets and personal income, especially after 2022.



The Pessimistic scenario forecasts weaker sales tax revenues in 2021 and 2022 with growth rates that are 1.6% and 1.8% lower than in the Baseline. Growth in sales tax collections pick up and exceed those of the Baseline in the final three years, but still remain approximately \$1 million below Baseline collections in 2025.

Chart 6-5. Annual Baseline Scenario - Sales Taxes



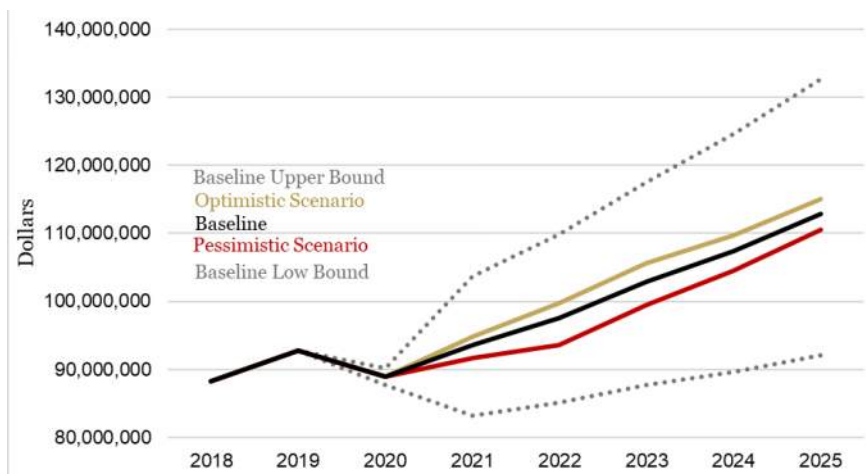
TOTAL TAX REVENUES

As shown in Figure 6, total revenues in 2021 exceed the previous 2019 peak by 1.3%. Then total revenues continue to increase steadily at annual rates of growth in the 4%-6% range. These projections constitute the BRD's most likely case.

The upper bound forecasts of total revenues exhibits dramatically higher growth rates, especially in 2021 with a 15% bounce back from the pandemic-induced recession. This forecast continues through 2025 with very high rates of growth in the roughly 6%-7% range.

On the other side the lower bound forecasts show negative growth for total revenues into 2021, followed by modest positive growth rates ranging between 2.2% and 3.1%. Total revenue collections barely reach their previous 2019 peak by 2025.

Chart 6-6. Annual Baseline Scenario - Total Taxes



Orchard Town Center

6.3 ISSUES AND PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan identifies goals and policies to promote economic resilience and fiscal sustainability, including a balanced local economy with a range of employment, placemaking policies aligned with other citywide objectives, infill and redevelopment opportunities in support of economic diversification, workforce development, and fiscal considerations. The single greatest issue and planning challenge relates to the limited inventory of vacant developable land, currently estimated at less than 7% of the city's land area. This suggests that a significant portion of new development activity will be through the redevelopment of sites where existing conditions may require reinvestment.

The city must be strategic with decisions regarding the remaining land and pursue development that is consistent with long-range vision and economic and financial needs. Water and utility constraints represent a serious limitation to development, and thoughtful attention should be given to economic considerations in land use decisions. Of particular priority are primary employers, specific retail uses that help to diversify the sales tax base, and redevelopment that encourages the investment of private capital.

Given the long-term nature of the Comprehensive Plan, departmental strategic plans refine policies and actions that respond to short-term influences and immediate needs. Some specific issues of concern include:

- Adaptation to changing community demographics
- Geographic distribution and location quality for jobs
- Business attraction and skilled workforce
- Changing retail environment
- Housing needs
- Declining population growth
- Potential long-term impacts of COVID-19 as related to real estate development trends

The following plans are incorporated by reference and should be consulted for greater detail:

- Industry Base Study (2017)
- Leeds School of Business Tax Projections Report (2020)
- Leeds School of Business Employment Study (2020)
- Housing Needs Assessment (2020)
- Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan (2017)
- Sustainability Plan (2021)
- Transportation and Mobility Plan (2021)

INDUSTRY BASE

Six industry clusters are of primary importance to Westminster due to their relative concentration compared to the nine-county region and the nation as a whole, their employment bases, and their growth. These clusters are:

- Aerospace
- Business Support Services
- Financial Services
- Healthcare and Life Sciences
- Retail, Hospitality, and Entertainment
- Technology and Information



6.4 GOALS & POLICIES

The following goals and policies provide direction for all aspects of physical planning. Goals are defined as desired ideals and a value to be sought. Policies articulate a course of action that guides governmental decision making to meet the goal. To further define how policies can be implemented in the short- and long-term, specific strategies can be found in the Implementation Action Plan.

BALANCED ECONOMY



Goal ER-1 Foster and maintain a balanced local economy with a range of employment types.

- 1.1 Focus on primary employers and businesses that provide jobs that pay higher than the counties' average annual wages.
- 1.2 Leverage Westminster's economic advantages in targeted key industries by incorporating industry-specific development characteristics into land use and infrastructure planning.
- 1.3 Maintain strong business relationships through retention efforts.
- 1.4 Continue to provide business assistance, information, and support.
- 1.5 Explore opportunities for partnerships with the private sector, counties, and other regional partners.
- 1.6 Encourage businesses and business programs focused on renewable energy, water conservation, clean technology, waste reduction, and recycling in accordance with Sustainability Plan policies and where consistent with the city's industry and employment composition.

FOCUS AREA PLACEMAKING



Goal ER-2 Support vibrant mixed-use centers in Focus Areas with a range of uses, multi-story buildings, and walkable street patterns with an engaging public realm.

- 2.1 Continue to promote Downtown Westminster and Westminster Station as regional and community-wide destinations with higher residential densities, and urban scale, and a range of land uses.

RELEVANT PLANS

The following plans are incorporated by reference and are not repeated in detail:

- Sustainability Plan
- Transportation & Mobility Plan
- Economic Development Strategic Plan (TBD)

CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS



Education



Equity - Diversity and Inclusion



Health



Resilience



Safety



Climate

- 2.2 In these higher intensity mixed-use districts, ensure a range of uses are provided to support transit ridership. Typically, the highest intensity of use should be located within a quarter mile, or five-minute walk from major transit stations.
- 2.3 Balance intensification of uses within Focus Areas with available services and infrastructure.

INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT



Goal ER-3 Promote redevelopment of targeted areas as catalysts for revitalization and improved conditions throughout the community.

- 3.1 Create design standards for redevelopment that are specific to geography and type of use.
- 3.2 Focus improvements and intensification of activity in existing regional shopping centers by evaluating surplus parking and allowing mixed-use development along major commercial corridors, ensuring that these centers are integrated into surrounding development, promote walkability, orient toward the corridor, and improve access to transit.
- 3.3 Encourage the redevelopment and improvement of older commercial areas by investing in public infrastructure, offering incentives, and facilitating environmental mitigation as necessary and appropriate.
- 3.4 Support planning and redevelopment objectives in areas designated as Urban Renewal Areas, consistent with the respective adopted Urban Renewal Plans.
- 3.5 Allow creative design solutions for infill development that are compatible with and enhance surrounding existing development.

Goal ER-4 Promote a balance of land uses and redevelopment opportunities that support a diverse economy.

- 4.1 Support and enhance existing retail centers and pursue infill and redevelopment opportunities for commercial centers and corridors with attention to vacant big-box retail sites.
- 4.2 Promote a balance of differing development types and locations.
- 4.3 Align city land use policies to support the sustainability of the economic base.



LOCAL WORKFORCE



Goal ER-5 Support the connection between residents and jobs in Westminster.

- 5.1 Provide greater employment options for residents and provide housing options for employers within the regional context.
- 5.2 Partner to support equitable access to quality education and opportunities for lifelong learning throughout Westminster.
- 5.3 Partner with the K-12 school system and technical and community colleges to prepare the workforce and support workforce training opportunities for local job placement.
- 5.4 Use placemaking approaches in Focus Areas to attract skilled labor, which, in turn, will attract quality employers.

LOCATION



Goal ER-6 Promote Westminster's regional location between Denver and Boulder to attract targeted industries.

- 6.1 Support key economic sectors with appropriate land use regulation and access to sufficient infrastructure.
- 6.2 Capitalize on access to US 36, I-25, and access to transportation options, including transit, to locate primary employment centers and retail opportunities.
- 6.3 Leverage the city's advantageous location to attract a talented workforce.

FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE



Goal ER-7 Promote fiscal sustainability and resilience within local government.

- 7.1 Maintain and monitor economic and financial policies to strengthen Westminster's fiscal conditions, while supporting excellence in community services, facilities, and amenities.
- 7.2 Study revenue diversification opportunities to support fiscal sustainability.
- 7.3 Continue to pursue and refine the mechanism for retail sales tax collection resulting from online purchases.
- 7.4 Develop a model to evaluate fiscal impacts of land use categories.

Goal ER-8 Support planning processes that are responsive and adaptable to changing industry trends.

- 8.1 Develop complete design standards and code modifications to reflect current best practices and trends in industries.
- 8.2 Evaluate regulatory and administrative processes to provide consistency and certainty in the development process that respond to changing industry standards.



7.0

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

The City of Westminster seeks to maintain the integrity and variety of existing neighborhoods; create high caliber, cohesive, new neighborhoods; and emphasize connectivity of existing and new neighborhoods to amenities, services, and multimodal transportation options. This focus on neighborhoods supports not only the *Great Neighborhoods* guiding principle, but also the guiding principles of *Managed Growth*, *Thriving Community*, and *Healthy Places*.

These guiding principles are supported by thoughtful design enhancements to the public realm, integrated planning for capital investments, and a focus on balancing varied community needs. Well-designed and constructed physical elements contribute to a safe, attractive, and engaging environment that residents, workers, and visitors can all enjoy. Neighborhood design that is sensitive to social and cultural contexts also contributes to establishing a sense of place and identity. Established gateways and vibrant streetscapes can provide a clear and welcoming entry into the community by reflecting shared values and civic pride. The preservation of scenic views, as well as cultural and historical landmarks, add to a community's collective sense of history and character. This chapter provides policy direction for maintaining and improving the city's physical and visual composition, with emphasis on maintaining high-quality and diverse neighborhoods, nurturing a strong community identity, and highlighting views and amenities.



OVERVIEW

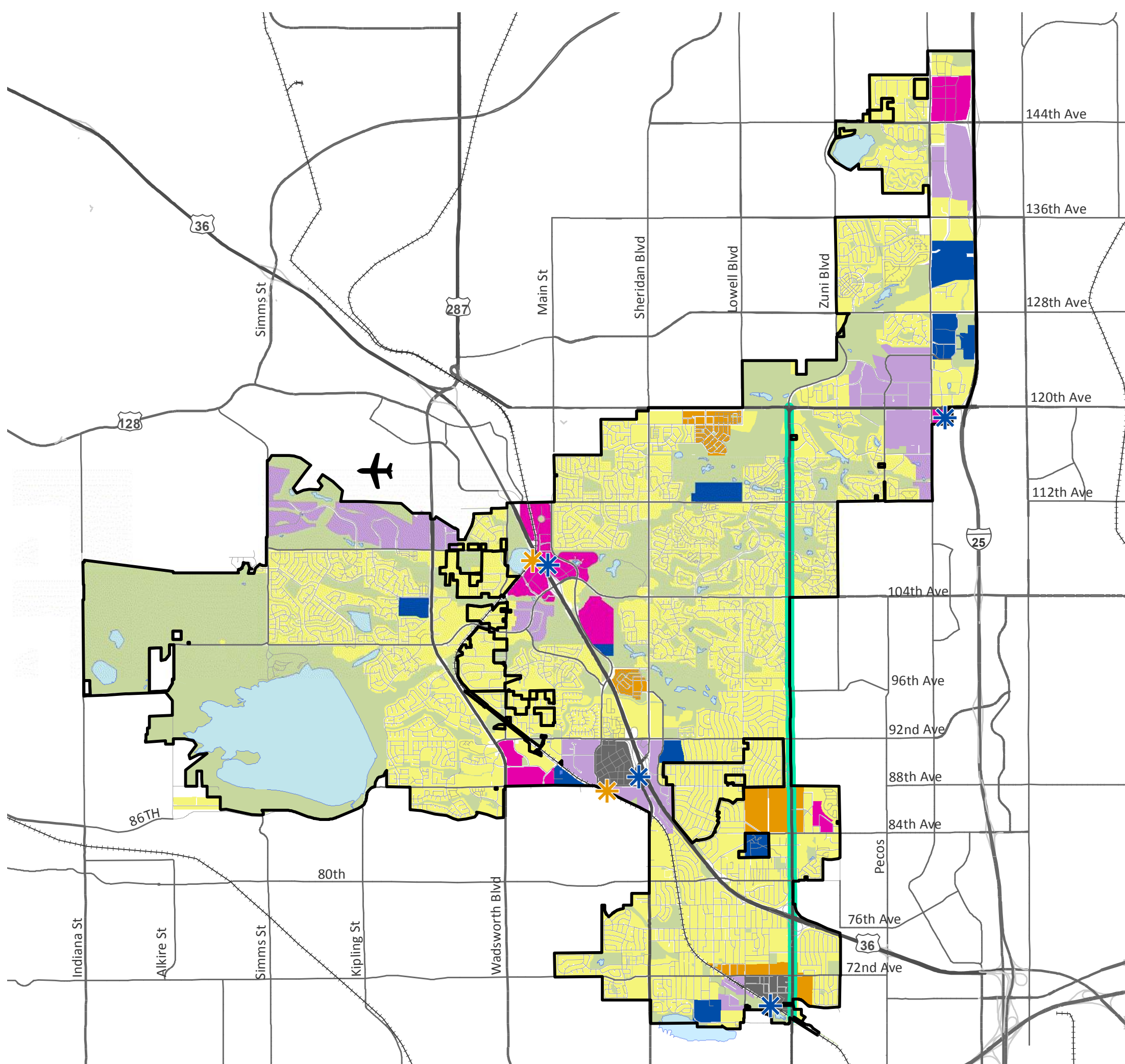
For the purposes of this Plan and its goals, the term neighborhood refers to geographic areas tied together by community-identifying elements such as schools, churches, shopping areas, parks, cultures, and/or identifiable boundaries. Within Westminster there are a range of neighborhood types and scales that offer a variety of living environments, housing types, and levels of affordability.

Reflecting broader changes in society, an increasing proportion of housing will need to meet the changing demands for multigenerational, or specialized units, and to provide options for affordable and workforce housing. Contextual and integrated architectural and site design can weave together different uses and housing types to promote diversity and variety to build **Great Neighborhoods**.

7.1 COMMUNITY DESIGN & BUILT FORM

The public realm, including streets, landscape, and buildings comprise the visual and physical fabric of a city. The quality of design and organization of these components directly impacts the perception and experience of a place. From a residential neighborhood to the development along commercial corridors, the design and construction of the built environment plays an important role in the way people live in and experience the city. Neighborhoods that are thoughtfully designed connect people to amenities and services in a safe and equitable way, and, inhabitants are more likely to walk or bike to a destination, enhancing the public life and social fabric of a community. Connecting new development into the surrounding context and existing neighborhood fabric creates the opportunity for long-term community resilience, retained social and economic value, and continued investment over time.

This section provides direction for overall design of the city's built environment in the context of neighborhoods. The goals and policies provide a framework for community design and are further delineated by the design guidelines and standards found in the Westminster Municipal Code (W.M.C.), which may be updated from time to time. General design direction for specific mixed-use and activity centers in the city is provided in chapter 2, Community Places, with further detail provided in specific plans for those areas.



Map 7-1. City Structure

Legend

- Suburban
- Mixed-Use Neighborhood
- Mixed-Use Opportunity Area
- Major Institution
- Employment
- Parks and Open Space
- Specific Area Plan
- Future Transit Stations
- Transit Stations
- Highway
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Multimodal Corridor
- Water
- Westminister



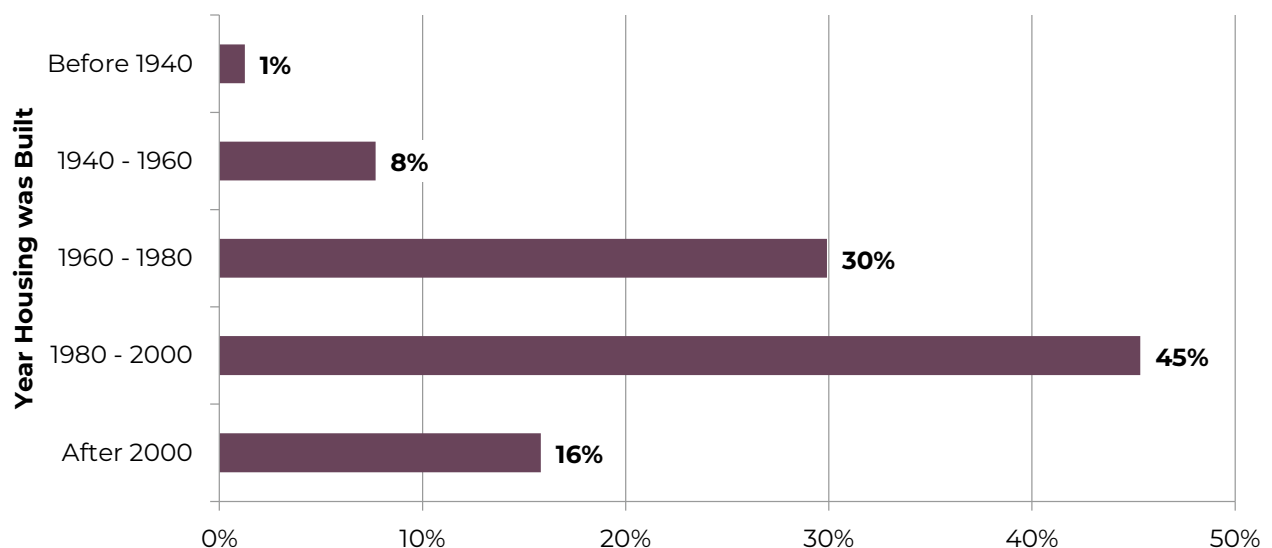
0 0.5 1 2 Miles



DISTINCT NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

Westminster is primarily comprised of established and older neighborhoods with nearly 87% of Westminster's homes built before 2000. Much of that was post-war development with modest home sizes and narrow sidewalks reflecting the auto-oriented culture. A later wave of construction in the 1970s and 80s created a built environment that reflects the curvilinear subdivision design typical of that era. Both of these patterns of segregated residential uses will be difficult to adapt to the changing needs of an aging and more diverse population because they create unnecessarily long travel distances to goods and services and limit feasibility for transit. *Westminster Forward* feedback indicates a preference for new neighborhoods to be more walkable and integrated with other uses.

Chart 7-1. Percent of Housing by Period Built



Source: American Community Survey 2019 5yr estimate

Most neighborhoods in Westminster were created through a Planned Unit Development (PUD) process. This provides developers flexibility in housing and neighborhood design reflective of the location and conditions of a particular site. The Preliminary Development Plan (PDP) is the regulating plan for land use and establishes neighborhood design elements that have created the unique character of neighborhoods throughout the city. These include:

- amenities and community gathering locations;
- design standards;
- landscaping requirements;
- streetscape requirements;
- views; and
- identity promotion through monuments, public art, and/or retention of historic sites.

GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS

Great Neighborhoods typically have a multitude of characteristics such as:

- Identity shaped by its physical setting, streets, architecture, history, and residents;
- Housing types to support different needs, preferences, and lifestyles;
- Gathering places that may take the form of parks, plazas, sidewalks, shops, or dining establishments;
- Access to services including recreation, education, public safety, and other amenities that support quality of life;
- Proximity to opportunities for retail, personal services, and employment to fulfill daily needs; and
- Mobility options that may include travel by foot, bicycle, transit, or automobile.

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan created the Traditional Mixed-Use Neighborhood Development (TMUND) designation as an option for new neighborhoods to incorporate a mix of housing types, neighborhood businesses and services, parks, community facilities, and a neighborhood focal point, which reflects the planning principles of New Urbanism. Integration of access to and location of amenities are also included in the design of new residential neighborhoods. Bradburn Village is the most well-known TMUND neighborhood in Westminster. This concept is continued with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan through the Mixed-Use Neighborhoods designation. Regardless of terminology, these planning practices are founded upon historic patterns of land use that have been shown to support enduring communities with a strong social fabric that promotes resiliency.

The remaining inventory of vacant land in Westminster is dominated by smaller parcels bypassed by previous developments for various reasons including ownership, limited infrastructure, or other site constraints. Neighborhood planning in Westminster historically involved large subdivisions consisting of hundreds of acres and identified locations for housing, parks, and civic uses, as well as potentially non-residential uses such as neighborhood-serving retail or office sites. With the exception of the 235-acre Pillar of Fire property, there are no remaining opportunities for such large-scale neighborhood planning in Westminster. Therefore, consideration needs to shift to the remaining infill and redevelopment sites and how these locations may connect to the existing fabric in complementary ways. Similarly, with review of proposed future developments, the evaluation will need to shift from considerations of the parcel in question to consideration of the broader surrounding neighborhood context. A general framework for this is the Neighborhood Unit concept introduced in Chapter 3, Land Use & Growth.

The unique parts that collectively form a Neighborhood Unit may be established on different timelines; therefore, the Neighborhood Unit concept can be used to evaluate infill development and the degree to which proposals complement the area in support of the **Thriving Community** and **Great Neighborhoods** guiding principles. Bringing smaller neighborhood elements together is what creates a distinct sense of place that gives a community an identity. It is often found that residents in vibrant, active neighborhoods are more likely to support local businesses, work together to solve neighborhood issues, and contribute more to the local community.

Implicit in the Neighborhood Unit concept is a community that works for all. The concept of 8/80 cities are becoming increasingly popular around the world. The 8/80 paradigm espouses that if communities are designed to work well for an 8-year old and an 80-year old, then wellbeing for the greater population can be achieved. 8/80 cities improve the quality of life for people in cities by bringing different populations together to enhance the built environment, resulting in more vibrant, healthy, and equitable communities.



Neighborhood Services

Neighborhood Services help maintain community safety and appearance, enhancing the quality of life for Westminster residents. With the care and attention that the community has placed into the development of distinctive neighborhoods, an equal or greater level of attention is necessary to maintain these places for future generations. Currently, various types of neighborhood services are maintained by multiple city departments including the City Manager's Office; Community Development; Economic Development; Parks, Recreation and Libraries; Police; and Public Works and Utilities. Services cover many areas such as responses to complaints and enforcing code compliance, housing and utility assistance, small business support, landscape and streetscape improvements, and animal control.

The city maintains a responsive code enforcement program that works closely within the community to protect public health, safety, and welfare by enforcing city codes related to property standards, nuisance issues, and land use violations. They also enhance the neighborhood quality of life through education, guidance, and community engagement and programming. Continuation of these activities will maintain and sustain Westminster's **Great Neighborhoods**.

A high level of engagement in neighborhoods also promotes the sense of community cohesion that residents appreciate and value. Throughout Westminster's neighborhoods, there are over 130 registered Homeowners Associations (HOAs) and various neighborhood organizations. The neighborhood registration service helps the city communicate with residents on development-related matters and other city services and programs.

Neighborhood services programs in the Colorado Front Range also typically include various types of enhancement or beautification programs, capacity building for neighborhood associations, and support for special events.



Neighborhood Services

8/80 PARADIGM

8/80 cities prioritize people's well-being. It is grounded in the belief that if everything we do in our public spaces is great for an 8 year old and an 80 year old, then it will be great for all people. 8/80 cities strive to improve the quality of life by bringing residents together to enhance mobility and public space resulting in vibrant, healthy, and equitable communities.



Westminster Station Facilities



7.2 HOUSING DIVERSITY

Westminster neighborhoods are mainly comprised of lower density housing, making up roughly one-third of the city's land area. Having a variety of architectural styles and housing typologies within a neighborhood provides interest to the built environment and the opportunity for different generations to live in close proximity to one another. Providing housing choices also allows people to stay in the same neighborhood as their housing needs change throughout their life. Having long-term residents in a neighborhood also brings stability and cohesion.

HOUSING NEEDS

It is important for the city to consider planning for economic mobility, social equity, increased community investment, improved sustainability, and maintaining the desirability of Westminster as a place to live, work, learn, and do business. Studies have consistently shown that stabilizing housing costs facilitates upward mobility and reduced long-term public sector costs in services. Further, households in stable housing environments are more likely to spend money in the local economy. From a fiscal perspective, there is also a benefit to local jurisdictions when commuting can be reduced with workers able to live closer to places of employment.

As housing costs continue to outpace wage growth and demographics change, the city will need to respond with policies and actions that serve all members of the community. According to the 2017 and 2020 Housing Needs Assessments, the future of housing in Westminster will be heavily influenced by formation of households by millennials, retired persons, and aging baby boomers; shifts in housing composition and employment growth; and relative affordability compared to the Denver Metro region.

Westminster has made a strong commitment to support investments in affordable housing options and to the diversification of product types throughout the community. The city completed an Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan (2017), which outlines policies with strategies and action items to work toward meeting current and future needs for renters, homeowners, and vulnerable populations. A Housing Task Force, made up of industry professionals, housing advocates, and elected leaders, was used to guide development of the Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan. Many issues identified in the plan touched on the city's development and design requirements. In addition to considerations for the Comprehensive Plan, specific development requirements need to be revisited to allow attainment of this goal.



Housing Affordability

A gap analysis of current conditions and unmet housing needs for renters, homeowners, and senior and disabled populations provides the rationale for Westminster's approach to addressing these issues into the future. While overall population growth in the city has been relatively low over the past decade, there has been a shift in age cohorts and the income levels of renters that have had an influence on both housing availability and affordability. Despite the national increase in the number of adults over age 65, Metro Denver and Westminster have seen an influx of millennials, a number of whom have high incomes and choose rental housing options. The number of residents living in Westminster and commuting to work in other cities, such as Denver and Boulder, has also gone up sharply. Together, these trends have lowered the poverty rate while also reducing the availability of unrestricted affordable units and widening the disparities between different income groups.

Chart 7-2. Net Migration by Age, Adams County, 2010-2020

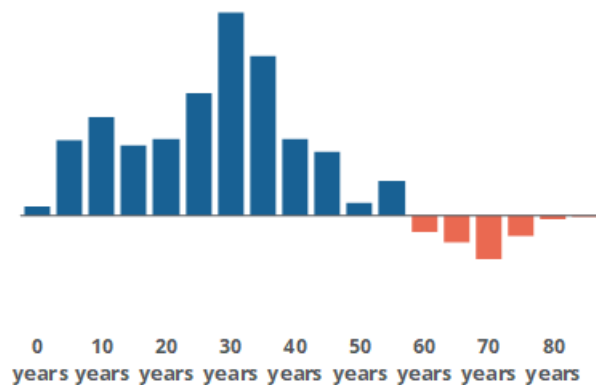


Chart 7-3. Net Migration by Age, Jefferson County, 2010-2020

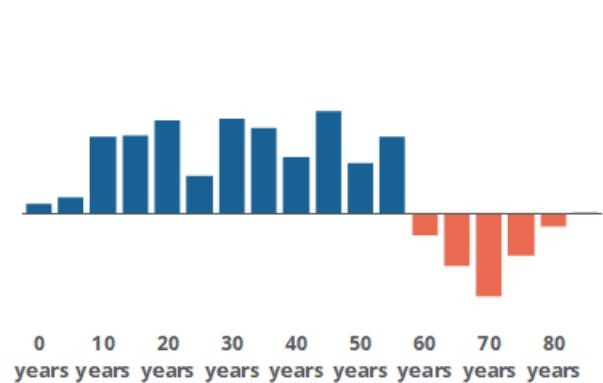


Table 7-1. Income Shifts in Westminster, 2015-2018

	2015		2018		2015-2018 Numerical Change	2015-2018 Percentage Change
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Total Households	42,844		46,002		3,158	7%
Owners						
Less than \$25,000	1,724	8%	1,772	4%	48	3%
\$25,000 to \$50,000	4,873	11%	5,010	11%	137	3%
\$50,000 to \$75,000	4,820	13%	4,771	10%	-49	-1%
\$75,000 to \$100,000	4,415	12%	4,234	9%	-181	-4%
\$100,000 or more	12,134	20%	12,395	27%	261	2%
Total	27,966	64%	28,182	61%	216	1%
Renters						
Less than \$25,000	4,353	11%	3,526	8%	-827	-19%
\$25,000 to \$50,000	3,547	11%	5,206	11%	1,659	47%
\$50,000 to \$75,000	3,158	9%	4,065	9%	907	29%
\$75,000 to \$100,000	1,310	3%	1,059	2%	-251	-19%
\$100,000 or more	2,510	2%	3,964	9%	1,454	58%
Total	14,878	36%	17,820	39%	2,942	20%

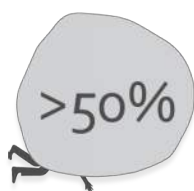
Source: Westminster Housing Needs Assessment; 2015 and 2018 ACS; and Colorado Department of Local Affairs

HOUSING COST BURDEN

Cost burden exists when households pay more than 30 percent of their gross household income for housing costs. Housing costs include the rent or mortgage payment, homeowners' association (HOA) fees, utilities, mortgage insurance, renter or homeowner insurance, and property taxes. Cost burden does not take into account transportation costs.



Households paying >30% for housing are **"cost burdened"**



Households paying >50% for housing are **"severely cost burdened"**

(Housing Market Analysis & Needs Assessment 2020)

Recent data gathered from the 2020 Housing Needs Assessment identified several critical areas to address: availability of deeply affordable units, opportunities for home ownership for low- to moderate-income buyers, attention to the special needs of the senior and disabled populations, and dispersion of affordable housing citywide. In general, the city has very few areas of concentrated poverty, but where poverty rates are highest, there is a correlation with single-parent households, higher numbers of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations, and ethnic concentrations. All of which suggest a need for other supportive community and neighborhood resources paired with affordable housing.

In general, renters are carrying a greater cost burden than homeowners with 51 percent of renter households compared to 26 percent of owner households. However, since 2015 the cost burden has increased for owner-occupied households and decreased for renters. This is reflective of incomes being outpaced by home prices at a rate of 35% to 1.7% and identifies a need for policies that enable development of a greater diversity of housing types and price points.

Table 7-2. Cost Burden by Income and Tenure

Household Income	2018		2015-2018 Change	
	Owner	Renter	Owner	Renter
Total Households				
Less than \$20,000	1,306	2,254	-64	-454
\$20,000 to \$34,999	1,809	1,770	75	-968
\$35,000 to \$49,999	3,523	4,038	27	1,821
\$50,000 to \$74,999	4,771	4,065	-39	911
\$75,000 or more	16,629	4,978	73	1,154
Total	28,182	17,820	216	2,942
Cost Burdened Households				
Less than \$20,000	1,111	2,126	-64	-448
\$20,000 to \$34,999	1,333	1,655	606	-889
\$35,000 to \$49,999	1,655	3,136	33	1,425
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,673	1,960	722	859
\$75,000 or more	1,497	130	882	-93
Total	7,269	9,007	2,179	854
Percent Cost Burdened				
Less than \$20,000	85%	94%	-1%	-1%
\$20,000 to \$34,999	74%	94%	32%	1%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	47%	78%	1%	0%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	35%	48%	15%	13%
\$75,000 or more	9%	3%	5%	-3%
Total	26%	51%	8%	-4%

Source: Housing Market Analysis & Needs Assessment 2020; ACS 2018



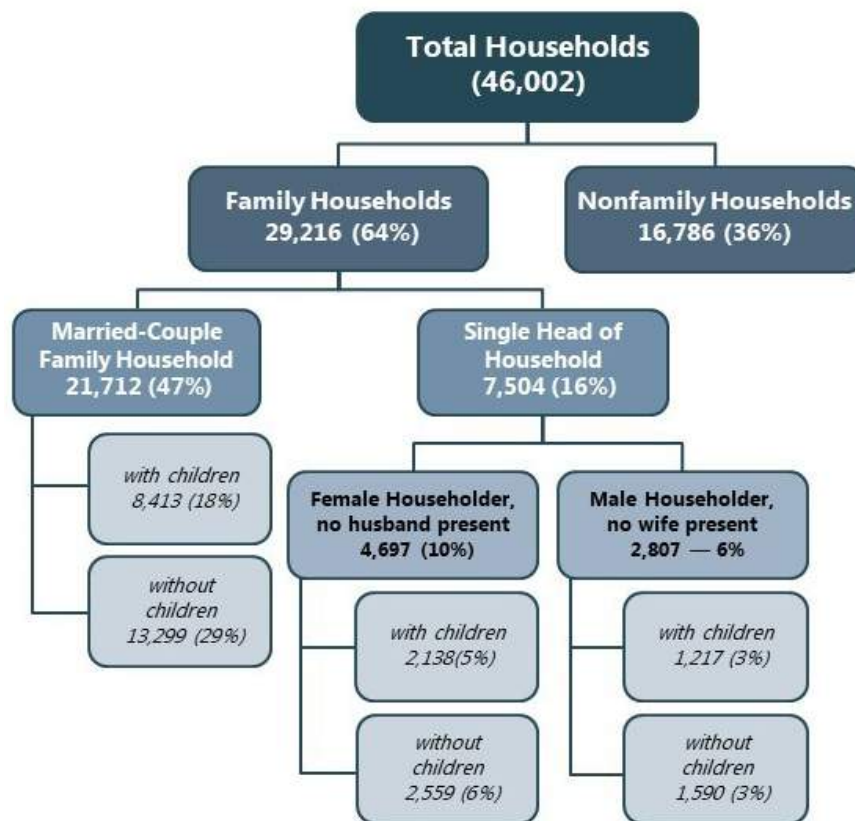
Table 7-3. Median Household Income by Tenure

	All Households	Owners	Renters
Median Household Income			
2000	\$56,429	\$63,870	\$41,040
2015	\$70,212	\$87,578	\$45,858
2018	\$71,626	\$89,041	\$50,859
Percent Change in MHI			
2000 to 2018	27%	39%	24%
2015 to 2018	2%	1.7%	11%

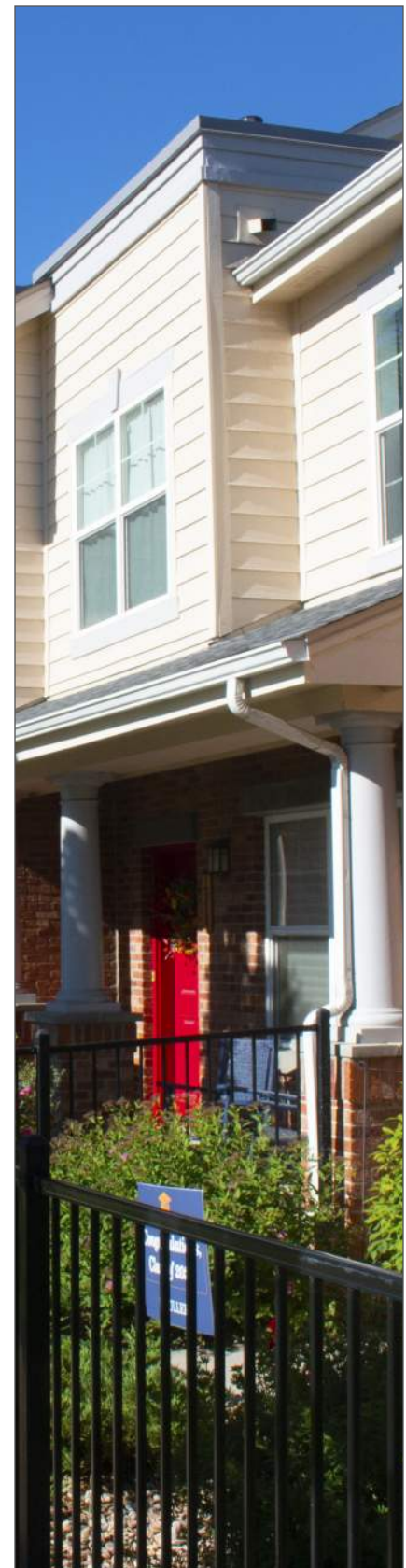
Source: Housing Market Analysis & Needs Assessment 2020; 2000 Census; 2015 and 2018 ACS

One of the recommendations related to land use in the Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan was an allowance for accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Appropriate standards for ADUs would be necessary to garner community support, but the provision of ADUs could supplement solutions for multigenerational housing and a continuum of care for seniors, for which demand is increasing.

Figure 7-2. Household Composition



Source: Housing Market Analysis & Needs Assessment 2020; ACS 2018



Senior Needs



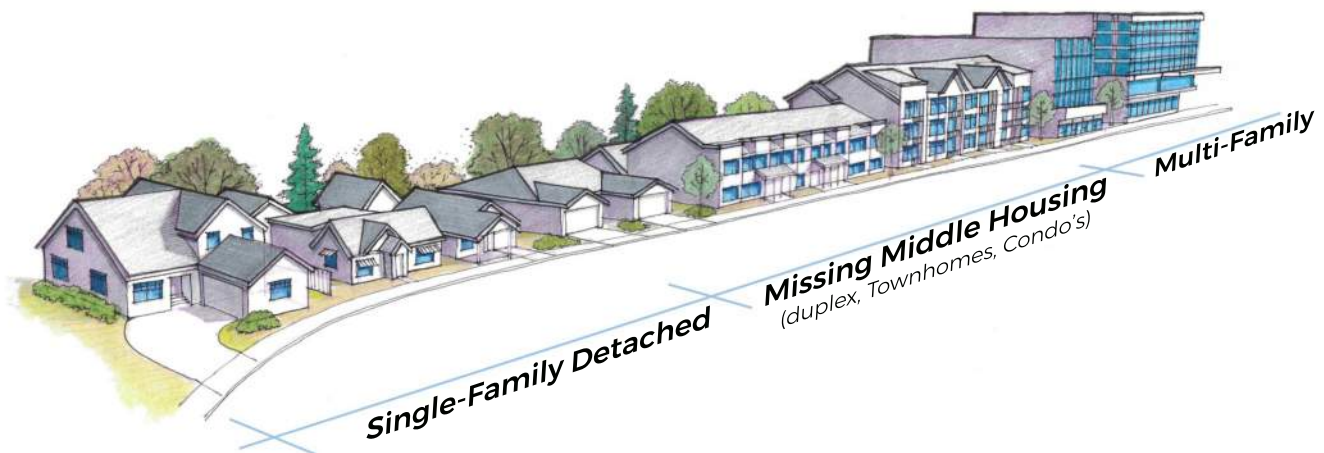
Keystone Place at Legacy Ridge

The creation of additional senior housing requires policy considerations in the Comprehensive Plan, as well as in the city's development requirements. The fastest growing age cohort between 2000 and 2018 were those 60 to 75 years old, increasing by over 9,000 residents. However, the 2020 Housing Needs Assessment reflected an out-migration of this age group, which may be indicative of a need for accessible, affordable senior housing. Opportunities will need to be considered including "downsizing" to different product types, as well as opportunities to support a continuum of care from independent living to assisted living to transitional facilities. Westminster has historically promoted senior housing within and among residential neighborhoods to allow seniors to feel part of the community and to be adjacent to housing where families may live that support seniors. Other locational considerations for senior housing, where many residents may not have access to a vehicle, including proximity to senior services programs, medical facilities and public facilities such as libraries and recreation centers.

Missing Middle

"Missing middle" housing is identified in the Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan as a strategy to meet current and future demographic needs. Most residential development focuses on low density, single-family development under 5 units per acre, or multifamily development with densities over 15 units per acre. In the "middle" is a housing type often overlooked, but important for young families, middle-income workers, and downsizing empty-nesters. The typologies of "missing middle" housing include townhomes, clustered cottages, paired homes, and triplex/fourplex units, as well as small-scale courtyard apartments. A balanced approach that carefully weaves missing middle housing within other types of development creates a more diverse and sustainable approach to housing opportunities.

Figure 7-3. Illustration of Missing Middle Housing





Additional Housing Needs

Finally, the city recognizes housing for persons who have special needs, temporary or long-term mental and physical health conditions, or who may be homeless and striving to attain self-sufficiency merits additional consideration and thoughtful planning. The city, working in partnership with service agencies, non-profit organizations, and the community, should identify avenues to provide permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, and seasonal sheltering for these populations to retain the ability to live safely and with human dignity. Meeting the need for this type of housing in the community, while also meeting the goal to maintain **Great Neighborhoods**, will be addressed by ensuring locations are evaluated relative to the necessary supportive resources and connections to health and human services.

7.3 IDENTITY & GATEWAYS

Westminster is a unique community with an extensive amenity infrastructure—from its trails and open spaces to its distinctive civic venues and activity centers. Ensuring the city's character and identity are visible at the city's edges and gateways is equally as important as the internal composition of the city. Establishing a strong identity within the Denver metro area begins with the city's visual presence along major transportation corridors, including freeways and regional arterials.

STREETSCAPE DESIGN

Street design influences the perception of the city. Regardless of mode of transportation, residents, workers, and visitors must travel on streets—the experience on these streets is often the first impression of a community. The combination of street design, level of comfort and ease of travel, and the quality and character of development along the street edge all have an impact on how the city is perceived. Many of Westminster's major arterials have been designed or improved with high-quality streetscape schemes. These streets incorporate landscaped medians, decorative street lights, and “amenity zones” with a detached sidewalk and landscaping along the edge of the street. Recently, the city has embraced Complete Streets concepts to enable safe use and mobility for all users, including people of all ages and abilities, and regardless of whether they are travelling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or by transit. As new development occurs throughout the city, including infill and redevelopment in older areas, there will be opportunities for improving streetscape design and further deployment of Complete Streets concepts further identified in the Transportation & Mobility Plan.

As streetscape improvements are implemented, Westminster's multimodal street network will become an extension of the community's identity and character, with enhanced transit



104th Avenue



*100th Avenue and
Sheridan Boulevard*



*108th Avenue and
Wadsworth Parkway*



82nd and Lowell Boulevard



Standley Lake

stops, distinctive lighting and pedestrian furnishings, bicycle facilities, and public art, where appropriate. These improvements are a distinct opportunity to underline gateway locations and distinguish the city from other communities.

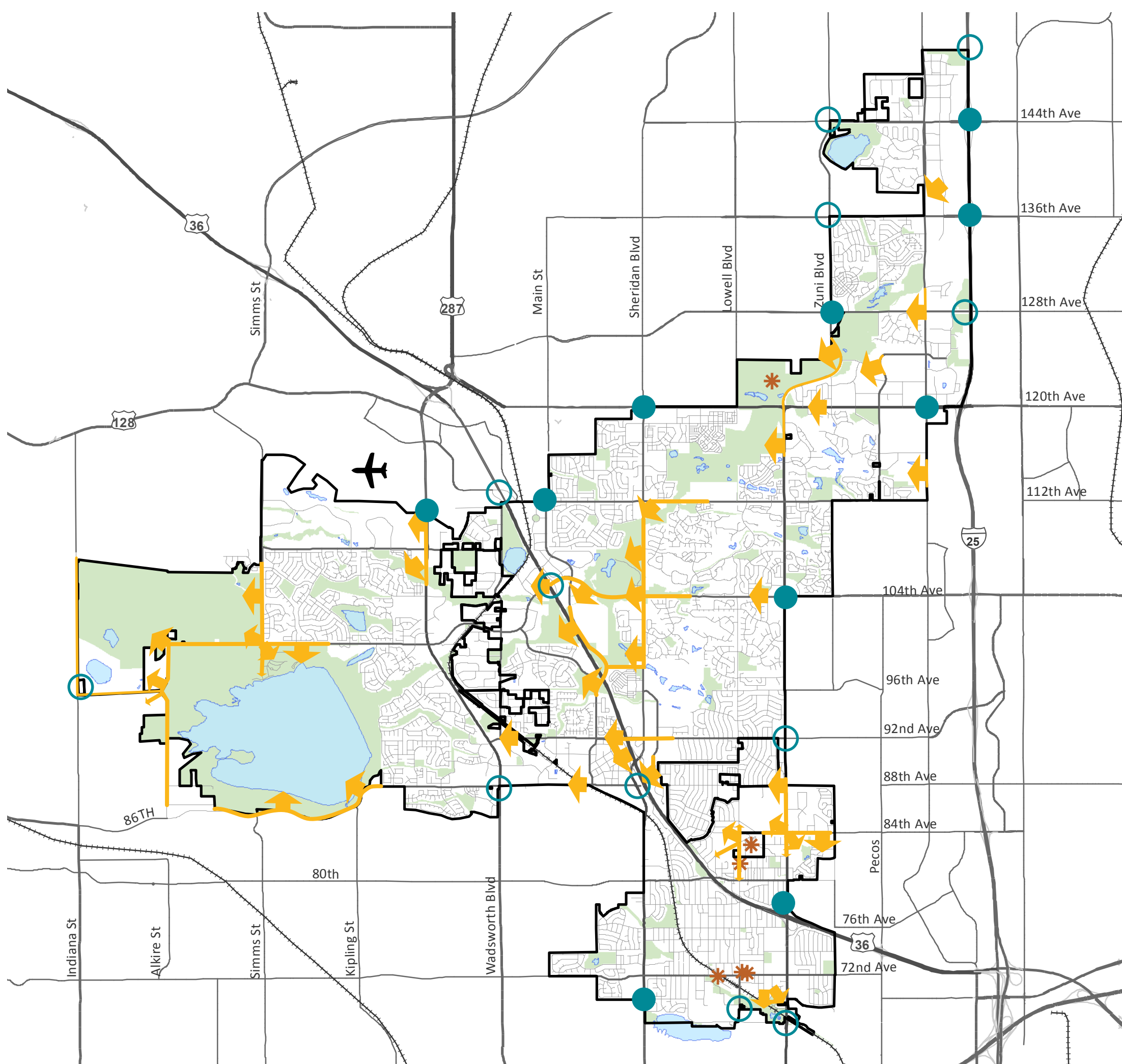
GATEWAYS

Gateways can promote identity of the community and distinct areas within the community. Gateways can take many forms, whether identification markers such as monuments or signage, public art, the strategic placement of a landmark or building, or civic space. The city has established gateway signage as shown in Map 7-2 and identification markers at most major gateways and has worked to create distinctive bridges along major arterials and highways like US 36 and I-25. New gateway elements may be appropriate to highlight Westminister's distinct neighborhoods and business districts. Placement of high-intensity development at key gateway locations will be encouraged to create a physical and visual presence that signifies the arrival into a unique subarea.

VIEWS















Scenic vistas to the mountains, Downtown Denver, or the city's open spaces resulting from the city's varied topography are a key element of Westminister's identity. Views are enjoyed from most areas of the city, although the best publicly-accessible views are found at points along many of the city's arterial streets and open spaces.

View corridors along portions of the city's major street network and from key public spaces are shown in Map 7-2. View corridors are not intended to preserve views from private properties or individual buildings, but rather, from the public realm, including the street network, trails, open spaces, and public facilities. Areas with a designated view corridor may be subject to additional setback requirements, height restrictions, and modified perimeter landscaping or site configurations to ensure that new development will not restrict views. Development proposed within these corridor areas will be evaluated to preserve views from the public realm wherever possible.



Map 7-2. Viewsheds, Gateways, and Historic Context

Legend

-  National Register of Historic Places
-  Highway
-  Major roads
-  Local roads
-  Railroad
-  Water
-  Parks and Open Space
-  Westminster
-  Primary View
-  Secondary View
-  Tertiary View
-  View Corridor
-  Existing Gateway
-  Gateway Opportunity



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

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7.4 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Westminster is a mature city with most development occurring from approximately 1960 to 2000 with few remaining lands for new growth and limited annexation opportunities. The city routinely looks inward to recognize and preserve unique spaces that contribute to community identity.

Westminster's first settler established his farm in what is now the Harris Park Neighborhood in 1863. Soon, others began to move into the area. One early settler was Edward Bruce Bowles, who arrived in 1870. His red brick home at the corner of West 72nd Avenue and Newton Street is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 1890, the village of DeSpain Junction was renamed Harris (after real estate developer CJ Harris)—the vestiges of which are present today as the Harris Park neighborhood in the vicinity of West 73rd Avenue and Bradburn Boulevard. The city officially incorporated in 1911, at which time the name was changed to Westminster, after Westminster University that was founded in 1908. As the City of Westminster expanded, other ranch and farm homesteads were folded into the city limits including the Town of Semper, Mandalay Gardens (Church Ranch), and portions of the Westminster University (now known as the Pillar of Fire) property.

In 2003, the Westminster city Council established the Historic Landmark Board and adopted the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Since that time, the city has been actively involved in identifying and partnering to preserve and restore many historic artifacts, buildings, and property. While historic preservation efforts seek to preserve elements of the city's past, they also



Westminster Plaza
Photo credit: Joyner



Westminster University



Turnpike Construction
Photo credit: Carnegie Library for Local History in Boulder

promote the evolving culture of the community as the city grows and changes. For example, in Historic Westminster, the Harris Park area has seen investment by the city in preservation and restoration of historic buildings and giving recognition to artifacts, stories, and structures lost over the years. These efforts are integral to the city's pursuit of revitalization in the historic neighborhood. The recognition of the area's history combined with historic preservation efforts has made the neighborhood an attractive location for artists to live and/or conduct business, contributing to the revitalization of the area into a dynamic, eclectic, and diverse mixed-use neighborhood and local destination. As a means of attracting new investment and development activity in the Harris Park area, the city continues to prepare and implement planning tools to promote and facilitate such activity. Key initiatives include designation of the Historic Westminster Arts District in the area and creation of design guidelines for historically sensitive infill development and renovation.

The city's historic preservation efforts also incorporate preservation and reuse of historic and cultural remains, from the Shoenberg Farm to the Ranch Open Space and its barn structure. The city intends to continue to support and encourage sustainable design and historically sensitive adaptive reuse throughout the community, with city-led building and planning efforts serving as an example for private development.



Lower Church Lake Barn and Silo



7.5 GOALS & POLICIES

The following goals and policies provide direction for all aspects of physical planning. Goals are defined as desired ideals and a value to be sought. Policies articulate a course of action that guides governmental decision making to meet the goal. To further define how policies can be implemented in the short- and long-term, specific strategies can be found in the Implementation Action Plan. They are not inclusive of all actions and options.

NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY



Goal HN-1 Ensure new residential neighborhoods, redevelopment, and infill areas support the neighborhood unit concept with multimodal transportation options and access to meet the everyday educational, recreational, civic, employment, and service needs of its residents.

- 1.1 Design new neighborhoods with an easily accessible focal point, such as a park or civic space that provides a unique identity and opportunities for community gathering.
- 1.2 Focus residential development greater than 5 units per gross acre in areas within walking distance of neighborhood services and shopping, employment, parks or open space, and multimodal transportation options—including transit. Typically, this distance should be no more than a quarter mile, or five-minute walk along safe, direct pedestrian paths and streets.
- 1.3 For lower density residential areas, focus neighborhood design that allows fulfillment of residents' daily needs within a 20-minute walk or bike trip from each home (also see Ch. 3, Land Use & Development, Goal 3, Policy 3).
- 1.4 Plan for impacts of changing technologies in the areas of transportation, shopping, and employment.

Goal HN-2 Enhance and maintain the character of the city's existing residential neighborhoods, balancing the need to accommodate infill development.

- 2.1 To ensure compatibility between different scales of development provide a transition in building height and massing where higher intensity development is located adjacent to low-scale development.
- 2.2 Support enhancement programs and efforts to strengthen existing or aging residential neighborhoods throughout the city.

RELEVANT PLANS

The following plans are incorporated by reference and are not repeated in detail:

- Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan
- Sustainability Plan
- Westminster Community Enhancement Plan
- Arts & Culture Plan
- Harris Park Community Vision Plan
- Transportation & Mobility Plan

CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS



Education



Equity - Diversity and Inclusion



Health



Resilience



Safety



Climate

- 2.3 Support flexibility in building design and type to allow neighborhoods to continue meeting the needs of the community such as senior housing, intergenerational families, and special needs housing.
- 2.4 Support the organization of Home Owners Associations (HOA) and Neighborhood Associations to advocate for the needs and improvements of existing neighborhoods.

HOUSING DIVERSITY



Goal HN-3 Provide opportunities for a range of housing types and affordability to accommodate all incomes, lifestyles, and age groups within the city.

- 3.1 Continue to provide a variety of both urban and suburban neighborhood types with a diversity of housing choices.
- 3.2 Blend “missing middle” housing types within other types of development to ensure neighborhoods that are resilient over time to demographic changes.
- 3.3 Support diverse housing opportunities to serve a range of household sizes, compositions, and needs.
- 3.4 Strive to preserve and maintain existing affordable rental and ownership housing.
- 3.5 Maintain and improve the affordable housing options throughout the city, as detailed in the Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan.
- 3.6 Pair supportive community and neighborhood resources with affordable housing.

Goal HN-4 Continue Westminster’s tradition as a caring community by ensuring housing options for seniors and residents with special needs.

- 4.1 Support housing options that meet the accessibility and functional needs of households with seniors and residents with special needs.
- 4.2 Expand housing options for the aging population with a spectrum of types including options to facilitate aging in place such as ADUs and intergenerational households and housing products for downsizing households.
- 4.3 Support a continuum of care from independent living to assisted living to transitional facilities.
- 4.4 Locate senior housing within residential areas to provide proximity to generations to support seniors and at locations with close proximity to senior services, medical facilities, and public facilities such as libraries.

RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTIONS

The objective of the program is to eliminate deteriorating conditions resulting in blight and to improve the level of safety, stability and appearance of neighborhoods, as well as promote an increased pride in Westminster. Rental properties are systematically inspected if:

- They are six years old or older
- They contain four or more units
- Four or more rental dwellings within any townhome or condominium community owned by a single owner

Individual townhomes and condominiums (up to three units under a single ownership within any townhome or condominium community), duplexes, and single-family units are inspected on a complaint-only basis, or can be inspected on a proactive basis.



STREETSCAPE AND PUBLIC REALM



Goal HN-5 Maintain and enhance Westminster's positive image and character through attractive streetscapes. (Also see TM Goal 2 and associated policies)

- 5.1 Continue to develop and support enhanced streetscape, development continuity, and revitalization of key commercial corridors.
- 5.2 Improve the visual and physical character of residential corridors throughout the city, to include provisions to support multimodal transportation.
- 5.3 Create a strong sense of entry into and passage through the city at key locations, identified on Figure 7-2, through gateway elements, streetscape enhancements, development scale and orientation, lighting, signage, and public art.

VIEWS



Goal HN-6 Preserve views to the mountains, natural amenities and scenic skylines from the public realm.

- 6.1 Maintain scenic vistas from rights of way, public facilities and public lands to Open Space, the mountains, Downtown Denver and the Front Range area, as shown on Figure 7-2.
- 6.2 Ensure that designated view corridors are integrated into planning for new development, shown on Figure 7-2. This may include dedication of land, setbacks, height restrictions, modified building orientation or placement on a lot.


COMMUNITY HERITAGE



Goal HN-7 Identify, recognize, and protect Westminster's unique and irreplaceable historic and cultural heritage and diversity.

- 7.1 Protect historic and cultural resources for the aesthetic, cultural, educational, environmental and economic contribution they make to maintaining and building Westminster's identity and quality of life.
- 7.2 Acknowledge and support Westminster's multi-cultural heritage and community diversity in planning city facilities, programs, events, and resources.

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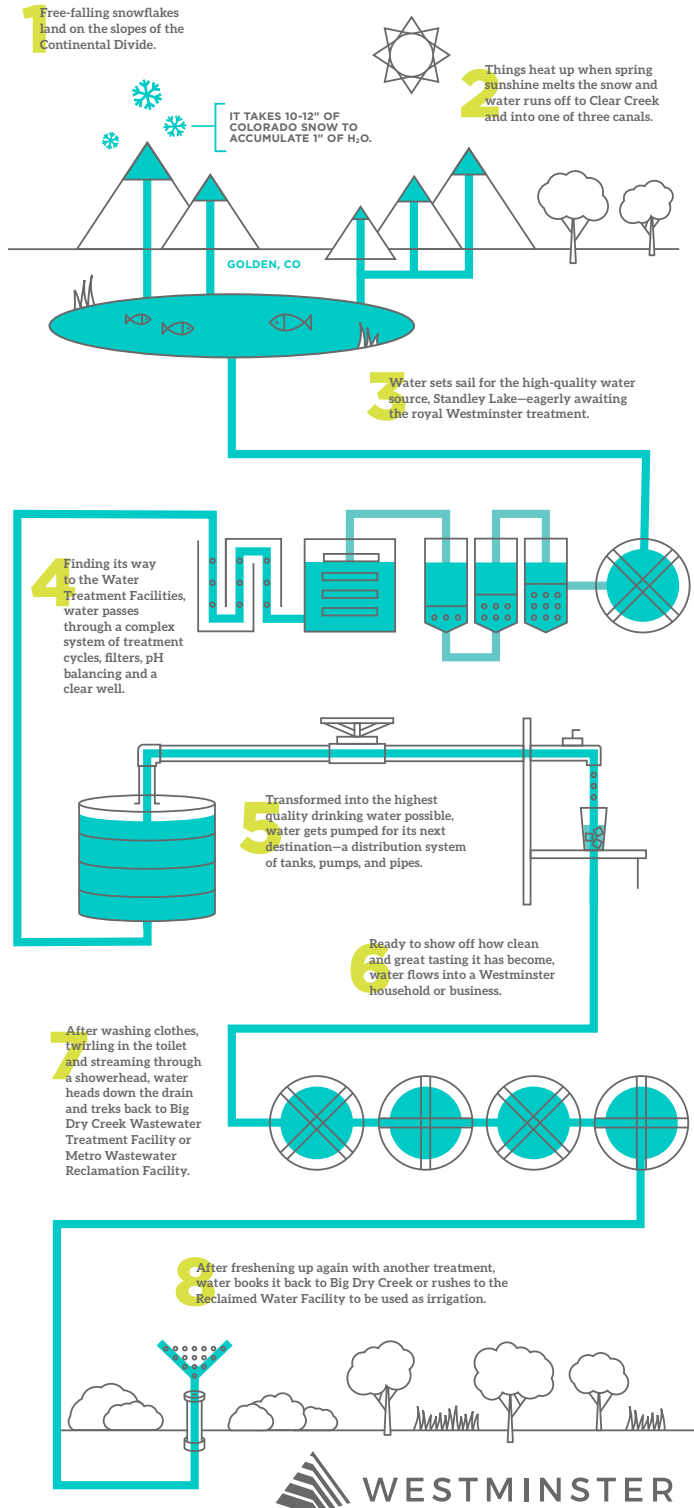
A man in a blue shirt is working on a large, complex industrial valve or pump assembly in a workshop. The background shows various tools and equipment, including a green machine. The scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent grey shape that contains the chapter title and a water drop icon.

8.0

UTILITIES AND RESOURCES

Public utilities and resources are an essential element of a city's quality of life and livability. Water quality and availability, the efficient removal and treatment of waste and waste water, and stormwater management are all essential to the function and quality of service in the city. These elements provide the foundation upon which the community is built and are critical to maintaining quality of services and emergency response. This chapter provides direction for continued high-quality public utility provision and resource use and management. Additional services not provided by the city are also addressed here, such as solid waste collection, electricity, gas, and telecommunications.

WHERE DOES YOUR WATER WANDER?



OVERVIEW

A key focus of the Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that the city is able to continue to provide adequate water supply and delivery to the Westminster community as it continues to grow in population and development intensity. This is embodied in both the **Healthy Places** and **Managed Growth** guiding principles. Water availability and utility infrastructure are essential considerations of future land use choices moving forward. Utility sizing and availability will also be important for higher-intensity redevelopment areas.

As a full service community, Westminster owns and maintains its own water, wastewater and, stormwater utilities. The associated infrastructure system is valued at over \$4 billion, plus a water supply portfolio valued at \$1 billion. This system includes water treatment plants, wastewater treatment, a reclaimed water system, hundreds of stormwater treatment ponds, thousands of miles of pipes, fire hydrants, pumps, tanks, valves, and other critical infrastructure to ensure exceptional water, wastewater, and stormwater service for the entire city.

Provision of utilities and services outside of the city's purview, such as solid waste, energy, and telecommunications, will be evaluated for adequacy and potential improvements as new development is proposed.

Through recent and ongoing utility planning efforts, Westminster hopes to harness momentum to promote water smart principles and increase sustainable planning. These goals will be balanced with the need to address current market challenges while allowing enough flexibility to accommodate future market trends. The Comprehensive Plan and companion plans, such as the Water Supply Plan, Sustainability Plan, and Unified Development Code (UDC), should continue to be evaluated and updated as needed to ensure alignment.



8.1 WATER SUPPLY

Water supply, treatment, and distribution are essential elements of Westminster's high quality of life and services. Ensuring that all residents and businesses in the city have access to high-quality water service, even in periods of drought, is a necessity for both existing and future development in the city. As Westminster intensifies and builds out, and cost of purchase of water rights continues to rise, maintaining a water supply to meet demand will be a key focus of land use and water supply planning. Water security depends upon appreciation of the semi-arid environment and responsible management of water resources. In 2015, the Colorado Water Conservation Board has completed a state-wide analysis identifying the State's water gap by 2050. This gap is estimated between 2.5 and 7.5 million acre-feet depending on the modeling scenario. For perspective, Westminster uses 20,000 to 23,000 acre-feet. The Clear Creek Basin, where most of Westminster's water originates, is already almost entirely converted to municipal use. There are no significant water supplies remaining to purchase. With water shortfalls expected state-wide and limited ability to purchase new water supplies, it is critical to ensure development occurs thoughtfully and in close coordination with water resources.

WATER SUPPLY PLAN

The Westminster Comprehensive Plan and Water Supply Plan are closely correlated and the city's development standards provide one of the primary implementation tools. Concurrent updates to these documents ensure these efforts are aligned to appropriately address water supply and infrastructure resources. Marrying the demand associated with development shown in the Comprehensive Plan to water supply modeling efforts has resulted in an integrated planning document.

The primary goal of the Water Supply Plan is to ensure the city has reliable, high-quality water supplies available for current and future customers as the city builds out. As part of this effort, multiple development scenarios were evaluated for the impact to water supply, to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Diagram can be successfully served by the city's buildout water supply. Water supply modeling has also been analyzed in conjunction with water quality models to not only ensure reliability in the quantity of water but also ensure that the water is of high-quality and fully compliant with applicable regulations.

The Water Supply Plan is driven by two primary factors: available water supply, and the amount and type of water demand on the system both today and into the future. Assumptions regarding climate change, conservation awareness, and system efficiencies are also variables evaluated with water supply. Low snowpack and watershed degradation due to wildfire, invasive species, and other factors have the potential to reduce the quantity and quality of the water supply. Recently, there have been significant



Water Taste Test at Westminster Forward Event

enhancements to the water supply model on the supply side of the equation. The model has been updated with the newest, best information available on the city's facilities, water rights, and Clear Creek water availability and quality.

CONSERVATION

Westminster has actively promoted water conservation and efficiency for nearly 45 years, and will continue promoting smart water use and water-wise development for all residents and businesses. Over time, the city's water conservation program offerings have changed to adapt to changing regulations, social norms, and water use patterns.

Moving forward the focus is on: 1) modeling water use efficiency at all municipal-owned buildings, parks, and golf courses; 2) improving indoor efficiency for low-income and multi-family residential properties; and 3) improving outdoor efficiency for single-family residential customers. About half of the city's treated drinking water is used outdoors for irrigation purposes, so the following programs are offered to help customers manage their water bill and outdoor use:

- Free irrigation system consultations,
- Water-wise garden kit discounts,
- Grass to Garden landscape remodel assistance, and
- Lawn removal service

To further promote conservation, as part of the effort to update Westminster Municipal Code, the city has identified proposed landscape ordinance updates, including standards for drought-tolerant and native plantings. By planning ahead for future drought conditions, appropriate landscaping techniques will improve resiliency for lawns, gardens, street trees, and park facilities.





8.2 SYSTEM OPERATIONS & CONSIDERATIONS

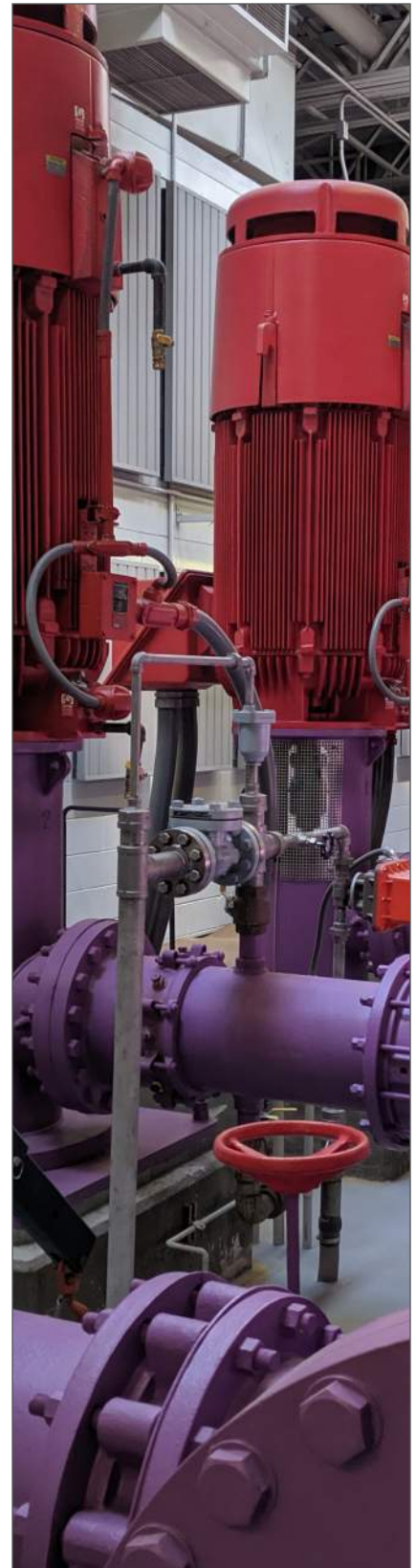
WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Indoor water use is closely tied to wastewater creation and sewer flows to the point where it can often be used as a proxy for sewer infrastructure demands, and vice versa. The main difference is that potable water rights and availability can generally be transferred across the whole city, but sewer pipes must be sized according to local demand.

Over \$20M in improvements to the Little Dry Creek sewer interceptor are complete and thus establish a finite capacity within the basin for the long term. Two Focus Areas are entirely located within Little Dry Creek basin—Downtown and the Station Area, and a portion of the Brookhill Focus Area flows to Little Dry Creek sewer basin. The Little Dry Creek Interceptor Sewer has been sized to accommodate planned development according to the 2013 Comprehensive Plan. Land uses projected in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan have been coordinated to benefit from the significant investment.

The Big Dry Creek Interceptor Sewer project will address critical sanitary sewer capacity issues in the area of the city generally north of 92nd Ave. The base project for Big Dry Creek was an identified 4.5 miles of interceptor in need of replacement located between Church Ranch and the Big Dry Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility (BDCWWTF), located at 132nd Ave and Huron St. Significant land use changes further upstream may be limited by capacity of tributary sewer interceptors. For example, while interceptor improvements between Church Ranch and the BDCWWTF may allow additional capacity in locations such as the Church Ranch Focus Area in this section, significant changes in land use resulting in increased sewer flows where these sites are served by tributary lines in the outer edges of the service area such as along Simms or near Standley Lake may not be possible.

The BDCWWTF treats an average of seven million gallons of wastewater per day from the northern two-thirds of the city. Recent work on the facility includes a new dewatering operation. The biosolids by-product produced during the treatment process is stabilized, thickened, and beneficially utilized as a soil supplement and fertilizer on permitted farms fields in the eastern part of Colorado. This project improves the efficiency of the overall solids management program, resulting in more efficient plant operations, reduced truck traffic, and improved farm operations. Future projects at BDCWWTF will be regulation driven due to more stringent regulations to improve water quality of receiving waters. Finally, both the amount of flow and the amount of solids sent to the facility, must be evaluated to ensure that the treatment capacity at BDCWWTF will be sufficient to meet buildout demands.



Reclaim Water System



Semper Water Treatment Plant

WATER TREATMENT FACILITIES

The City of Westminster has two water treatment facilities that produce drinking water that continually meets or exceeds all state and federal drinking water quality standards. The facilities are designed to remove dissolved and suspended solids, manganese, iron, offensive tastes and odors and pathogenic micro-organisms. The Northwest Water Treatment Facility is capable of treating up to 15 million gallons per day using state-of-the-art membrane micro-filtration. The Semper Water Treatment Facility is capable of treating 44 million gallons per day using conventional filtration technology.

The WATER 2025 Program is a long-term planning project to replace the city's aging Semper Water Treatment Facility and ensure high-quality drinking water for our community now and into the future. A safe and reliable drinking water system is one of Westminster's greatest assets. The community is fortunate to enjoy a high-quality water supply originating in the Rocky Mountains. As Westminster and all of the Front Range continues to grow, responsible planning for the needs of future generations is critical to promote the same quality of life as exists today.

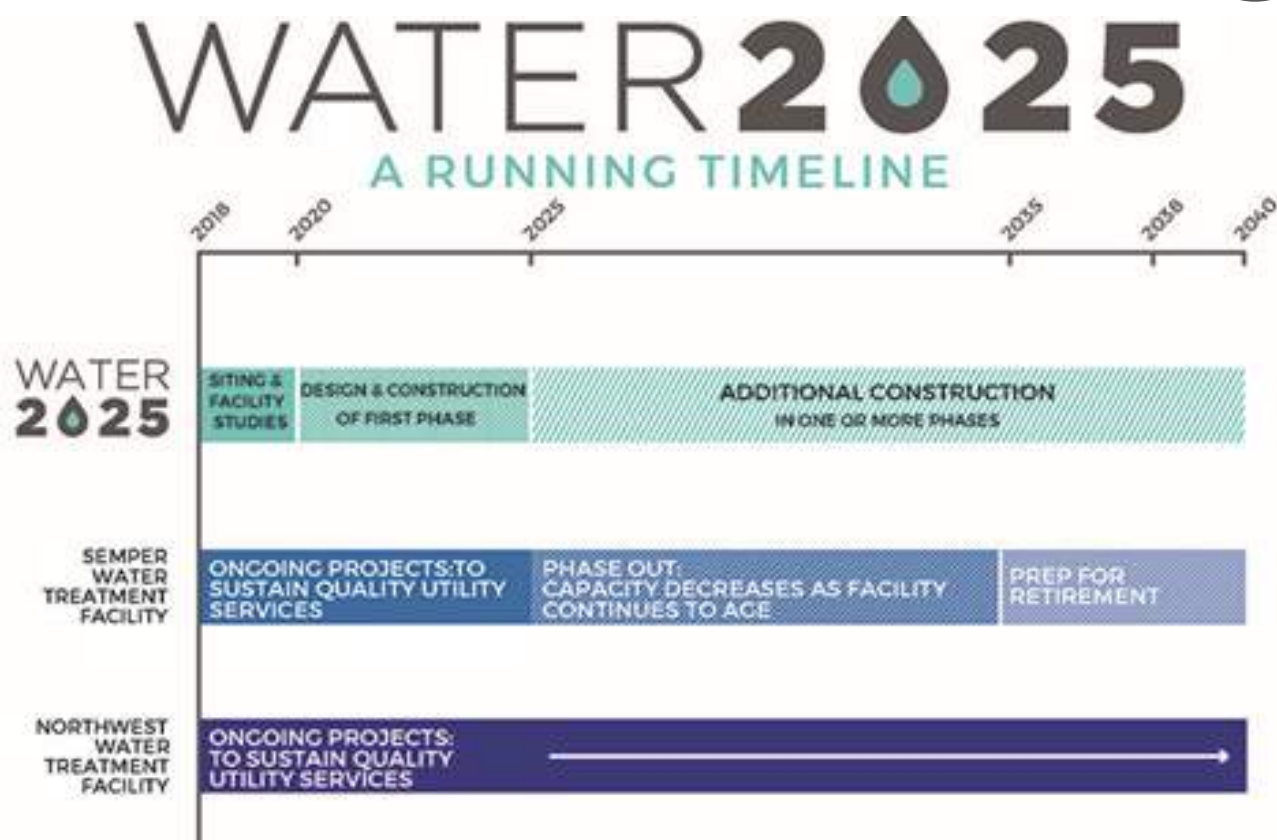
Like any complex system, Westminster's water distribution system requires continuous maintenance and planned upgrades. As Westminster's current drinking water system continues to age, it becomes more expensive to maintain and increasingly vulnerable to threats posed by drought, invasive species, and wildfire.

Semper Water Treatment Facility has served the Westminster community for over 50 years and has the ability to continue providing high-quality drinking water for 15 to 20 more years. In recognition of the need to plan ahead, in 2015 the city-initiated planning for a new drinking water treatment facility to meet the needs of our current and future generations who rely on this essential public service. Future decommissioning of Semper should be considered in the context of the Brookhill Focus Area and other municipal facility needs that exist in the area.

A new drinking water facility using advanced technology will provide:

- Greater resiliency in times of challenging treatment, such as a wildfire in our watershed.
- Greater flexibility to adapt to changing regulatory standards.
- Greater security to address future shortages in our water supply.
- Greater opportunities for environmental sustainability and resource stewardship.

WATER 2025 began in early 2018 with the goal of identifying the best location for the city's new drinking water treatment facility. The site selection phase has been completed, identifying a site near 98th Ave and Westminster Blvd., and design work is underway to be followed by the construction phases. The facility will need to be considered in the context of the Church Ranch Focus Area and compatible with adjacent open space lands.



8.3 FEASIBILITY OF FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICE COSTS

The city's Utility Fund is an enterprise fund established to ensure that customer rates and fees are directly invested in the water and wastewater system and segregated from the city's General Fund. The utility fund has only two sources of revenue: customer rates and tap fees. The Utility's rates and fees are charged to customers to recover the costs of providing drinking water and wastewater services. The balance and appropriate setting of these rates and fees is crucial to the short- and long-term sustainability of the Utility Fund.

Water and sewer rates pay for the costs to operate and maintain the Utility, including the costs for labor, chemicals, parts, and contracts. Rates also pay for personnel benefits, debt service (the principal and interest payments due for debt issued to fund projects), and a portion of the costs to repair/replace parts of the utility system.

Tap fees are charged to new utility customers to connect to the city's water and wastewater systems, and are based on the current value and size of the water and sewer utility systems and on the



value of the city's water rights portfolio. These fees generally follow the philosophy that growth pays for growth, therefore tap fee revenues are intended to pay for improvements to the Utility and to purchase water supplies. Occasionally when the success of a development requires off-site utility improvements to water or sewer, the development must also pay for those improvements.

All utilities must deal with the reality that while the vast majority of costs are fixed, the vast majority of revenue is variable. Water sales are impacted by climate, including rain and drought, and water and sewer tap fees are impacted by the timing and amount of development in the city. Westminster adopted a set of financial policies in 2006 to address this revenue variability. A cost of service study was completed in 2018 that resulted in updated policies, adopted by city Council. As the city approaches buildout, the Utility will gradually increase its reliance on rate revenue as fewer tap fees for new developments are sold. This strategy will allow the Utility to remain sustainable into the future.

Westminster's population has increased significantly since the water and wastewater utilities were first created, and the Utility has required improvements over time to meet that growth. Improvements are also needed in anticipation of future growth and ongoing repair and replacement work required to keep an aging water and sewer utility system functioning. Over time, the utility system will continue to depreciate and will need additional repairs. City staff regularly performs a robust "eyes on all assets" review. This comprehensive and time-intensive effort provides staff with solid data regarding the condition and anticipated repair/replacement cost of the Utility's capital assets to best inform the rate and tap fee recommendations.

The city has experienced both a significant growth in new customers and major changes in water use patterns by its customers such as more compact development, revitalization of older neighborhoods and an increase in restaurants and microbreweries. These changes affect the amounts of revenue collected by different customer classes and by customers within a given class of customers.



8.4 STORMWATER QUALITY

The City of Westminster is located within the South Platte River basin with 69 miles of tributary drainageways running through the city. Major drainageways that are tributary to the South Platte basin include Big Dry Creek, Little Dry Creek, and Walnut Creek. Defined and regulated floodplains are located along all of these drainageways, providing a riparian environment of wetlands, water bodies, and natural drainage areas that also provide important wildlife habitat and which protect source water from pollutants. The city continues to identify opportunities to improve drainage and flood control citywide—an effort that will become more essential as the city builds out and intensifies in already urbanized areas. Unlike the wastewater system, the city's stormwater system largely goes untreated before it is discharged into drainageways.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

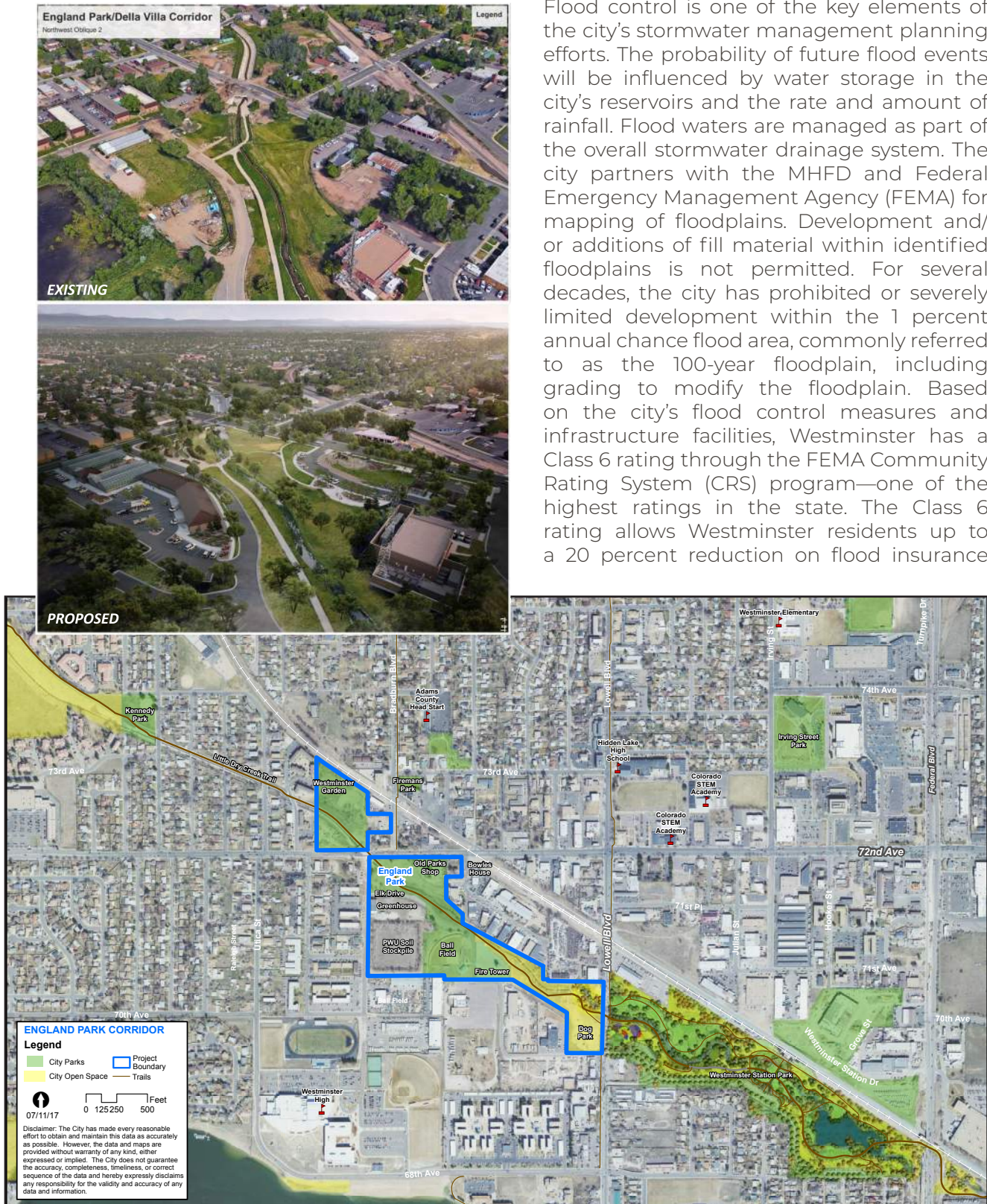
The city has a stormwater utility enterprise that protects people, property and the environment through floodplain management, federal and state permit compliance, capital improvement projects and, infrastructure repair and replacement. The existing drainage system in Westminster is comprised of an integrated system of treatment ponds, curbside gutters, underground storm sewer pipes, drainage ditches, lakes, open channels, and natural creeks. The city generally maintains drainage facilities within the public right-of-way, on public easements, and on property owned by the city such as Open Space. Components of the drainage system on private property, or within private drainage easements, are maintained by the underlying property owner, metropolitan service district, homeowner association or other private party. As a Phase II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) community within the federally regulated National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, the city is required to comply with Federal Clean Water Act laws and the State issued stormwater discharge permit.

On a regional level, the City of Westminster falls within the Mile High Flood District (MHFD) and actively participates with MHFD on major drainageway planning. These plans have been adopted by the city with several proposed capital improvement projects having already been constructed or under design. Any new development that falls within a drainageway shown on a master plan will be required to follow MHFD criteria for the design and construction of such facilities. Upon approval, MHFD will assume long term maintenance of the drainageway. In general, the city seeks to consolidate treatment facilities that feed into regional drainageways, particularly when serving higher density development. As the city becomes denser, planning impacts and improvements to the city's drainage system, as well as opportunities for expansion, will be evaluated and implemented in concert with new development.



FLOOD CONTROL

Flood control is one of the key elements of the city's stormwater management planning efforts. The probability of future flood events will be influenced by water storage in the city's reservoirs and the rate and amount of rainfall. Flood waters are managed as part of the overall stormwater drainage system. The city partners with the MHFD and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for mapping of floodplains. Development and/or additions of fill material within identified floodplains is not permitted. For several decades, the city has prohibited or severely limited development within the 1 percent annual chance flood area, commonly referred to as the 100-year floodplain, including grading to modify the floodplain. Based on the city's flood control measures and infrastructure facilities, Westminster has a Class 6 rating through the FEMA Community Rating System (CRS) program—one of the highest ratings in the state. The Class 6 rating allows Westminster residents up to a 20 percent reduction on flood insurance





premiums for properties located in floodplains, and up to 10 percent reduction on flood insurance premiums for properties located outside of the floodplain.

Over 80 percent of lands located within 100-year floodplains are within city-owned open space. This is most evident in the wide Big Dry Creek Open Space system and its network of trails from Standley Lake to Interstate 25. Little Dry Creek in the southern section of the city is managed from flood hazards by channel improvements and open spaces, most notably the recently completed Westminster Station Park.

STORMWATER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Capital improvements are typically a physically constructed stormwater infrastructure project. These projects fall into a wide range of improvements that can be large regional flood control basins like at Westminster Station or repair of a sink hole caused by a collapsed pipe or even removing an illicit connection that dumps pollutants into the storm pipe system. The city makes annual requests of MHFD to leverage matching capital project funds for major drainageway improvements. Since the MHFD was created in 1969 the city has received tens of millions of dollars in matching funds from them and has performed dozens of capital projects on the 69 miles of creeks running through the city.

STORMWATER PERMIT COMPLIANCE

The city is required by Federal Clean Water Act and State of Colorado water quality regulations to comply with a stormwater discharge permit and report on those activities annually. Permit requirements are broken into five sections of compliance each with their own specific requirements. Permit sections include public education and outreach, construction site discharges, post-construction treatment, municipal operations and, illicit discharges. These sections require city staff to perform educational outreach activities to inform the public about stormwater pollution, to inspect, document and enforce construction site pollution runoff controls, require treatment facilities to be installed with each new development or redevelopment site, maintain good housekeeping, pollutant runoff controls, inspections and record keeping at all municipal facilities and, have an active program to investigate, remove and legally enforce upon any illegal connection made to the stormwater collection system. Reports on these activities are required to be provided to the State Water Quality Control Division annually with penalties for non-compliance with any of these permit terms being \$1,000 per day per violation.



Painted Stormwater Drains

STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT

As introduced above, most of the city's utility infrastructure was installed in the 1970s. Stormwater infrastructure follows that same timeline with a couple notable deviations. Flood control historically was a practical issue. The early pioneers had no choice but to manage drainage in the arid west where flash flooding is common. In the early days, diversions were created and pipes were installed mostly to alleviate as much of the flash flooding as was possible. Today, development and redevelopment are required to design and install stormwater infrastructure much different than the pioneers. Those early residents of the city installed inlets, pipes, manholes and outlets well over 50 years ago just to collect and divert flood flows away from town. The design lifespan of stormwater infrastructure is generally fifty years. Back then it was not common to preserve records of locations of infrastructure or materials used. Today, the city is embarking on an ambitious effort to update mapping data and assess the condition of all the stormwater infrastructure throughout the city. This is a multiyear process that will ultimately prioritize and rank necessary repairs and replacement projects from most critical to least. It will also establish a need-based level of service for future funding of long-term preventative maintenance, repair and replacement of a stormwater system that has median age of about 40 years and a design lifespan of 50 years. It is estimated that 30% of the stormwater infrastructure is over 50 years old, 30% is between 20 and 50 years old and 30% is under 20 years old and considered in good shape. These numbers will be more precise when the city has completed its full condition assessment and has prioritized and mapped the entire stormwater infrastructure system.



*Water Quality Testing at
Stormwater Facility*



8.5 SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING

The City of Westminster does not manage or operate trash and recycling services. Solid waste collection in the city is contracted independently by property owners and homeowners associations. Companies that are contracted must be licensed to offer the service through the Solid Waste Collection section of the W.M.C. Solid waste collectors haul trash to multiple landfills that serve the Front Range and Denver metro area, including Foothills Landfill in Golden, Denver Regional Landfill in Commerce city, and Front Range Landfill in Erie. Capacity issues within these landfills are not anticipated.

All companies licensed to collect solid waste are also required by the city to offer curbside recycling options to all of their customers. Currently, 11% of all waste collected in Westminster is diverted from reaching the landfill by recycling or composting, which is below the 18% regional diversion rate, according to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

In addition to household solid waste recycling efforts, the city encourages construction and business recycling efforts. All city facilities provide recycling for employees. In conjunction with the Sustainability Plan, the Comprehensive Plan builds upon current material management efforts, including yard waste composting locations, city-run recycling drop-off centers, and household hazardous waste programs. By enhancing and expanding recycling and composting programs and employee education, the city can increase its waste diversion rate.

SUSTAINABLE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

In Front Range communities like Westminster, reducing waste at the source and increasing diversion efforts have the potential to produce substantial environmental and economic benefits. By recycling and composting, communities can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy associated with the extraction and production of new materials and the decomposition of organic waste in landfills. Material reuse and waste diversion also have the potential to boost Westminster's economic resilience by creating new jobs. (2020 Sustainability Plan)



Single Stream Recycling Downtown



Cell Phone Recycling



Xcel Substation

8.6 UTILITIES

Although the City of Westminster does not operate energy and telecommunications utilities, city residents and businesses do benefit from ready availability of electricity and gas as well as high-speed cable, phone, and internet service. This section provides background on the city's utilities provision and accommodation of these services.

ELECTRICITY AND GAS

Electricity and gas service for the city is primarily provided by Xcel Energy, a regional entity that provides energy to many states in the Midwest. Xcel Energy's company-wide power supply is generated by a variety of fuel sources including coal, natural gas, nuclear fuel, wind, and a combination of other sources including water, oil, solar, and refuse. Xcel's goal is to reduce its electricity carbon emissions by 80% by 2030, and to be 100% carbon-free by 2050. Westminster is also home to the headquarters of Tri-State Generation, one of the city's largest employers. Tri-State is a not-for-profit power supply cooperative of 46 members, including 43 electric distribution cooperatives and public power districts in four states that together deliver power to more than a million electricity consumers across nearly 200,000 square miles of the West. In 2020, Tri-State announced plans to retire all coal generating power in Colorado and New Mexico, which is a good example of private sector support for the city's sustainability goals.

The City of Westminster participates in Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy offering, which leverages existing utility programs to improve municipal, residential, and commercial energy efficiency. The company will continue to make significant changes to the power supply composition and operation, to meet Colorado's Clean Air Clean Jobs Act and the goals outlined in Xcel Energy's Colorado Energy Plan. With their current renewable energy programs, the company expects to meet the goal of the Colorado renewable energy standard of providing 30% of electricity from renewable sources (note: in 2018, 28% of their power came from renewable sources).

In addition to Xcel Energy service, a small portion of the city's northernmost extents is served by United Power, whose energy is provided by Tri-State Generation. Additionally, some individual property owners, including the city, produce solar energy on-site with the use of solar panels. The city encourages and supports on-site solar energy production for both residential and commercial uses. Location of on-site solar panels is subject to city zoning standards and guidelines to ensure visual impacts are minimized. The city has subscribed to 4.2 megawatts of community solar garden energy, enough to power city Hall, the Public Safety Center, and city Park Recreation and Fitness Centers. This example is matched by Westminster residents with more than 2,788 solar installations, currently representing 6.2% of Westminster homes.



The Westminster Sustainability Plan establishes an objective of a resilient, equitable, and reliable energy future powered by low-carbon and renewable energy. This Plan identifies strategies and actions to support this objective.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

The availability and quality of communications infrastructure directly impacts the city's business environment. While also a priority for residential use, high-quality internet, fiber optic and cell service are key amenities for employers. Although these services are not directly provided by the city, the Comprehensive Plan supports continued efforts to upgrade existing telecommunications infrastructure.

The City of Westminster has made a commitment to excellence in information technology and has ranked in the top ten in the National League of Cities' Center for Digital Government Center "Digital Cities" for cities between 75,000 and 125,000 in population. This effort looks for cities nationwide who align their technologies with city goals in order to improve the interactive experience for citizens and others doing business with the city; save tax dollars through newfound efficiencies; boost transparency, cybersecurity, and engagement; and innovate through unique and exciting projects. Of particular interest is deployment of broadband and wireless infrastructure, and opportunities to increase access for the entire city. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic brought to light the "digital divide" with many households lacking access to learning, services, and transportation.

Cable and Internet Service

Cable and internet service for residents and businesses in the city is provided by Comcast and CenturyLink. These services are currently available to all areas of the city as well as to those that are likely to buildout over the Plan horizon. Upgrades to the infrastructure are the responsibility of each private enterprise and will be evaluated and conducted in response to demand. The city holds a franchise agreement with Comcast to provide service in areas with a minimum density of potential subscribers. Additionally, the city encourages undergrounding of all cable and internet utilities and will work with service providers to coordinate improvements as streets are constructed or improved, and this may include installation of conduit to support broadband infrastructure with new development and ensuring fiber to public facilities such as schools and libraries.





Cell Tower

Cell Towers

Westminster allows the construction of Wireless Communication Facilities (WCFs) on private property and, on a more limited basis, on public property. City public rights-of-way may also be considered for small cell applications, but must meet specific placement, spacing, and appearance guidelines. Upgrades and refinements to existing sites are encouraged over new sites. Both the Comprehensive Plan and the Westminster Municipal Code emphasize proper placement, screening, integration of equipment into building design, and other similar strategies to reduce visual clutter, avoid unnecessary proliferation, and to minimize negative aesthetic impacts wherever possible. Current trends in wireless development are focused on augmenting older 4G and 4G/LTE network infrastructure with newer 5G technology, especially as seen with new small cell poles in the public right-of-way.



8.7 GOALS & POLICIES

The following goals and policies provide direction for all aspects of physical planning. Goals are defined as desired ideals and a value to be sought. Policies articulate a course of action that guides governmental decision-making to meet the goal. To further define how policies can be implemented in the short- and long-term, specific strategies can be found in chapter 9, Plan Compliance & Implementation. They are not inclusive of all actions and options.

WATER SUPPLY



Goal UR-1 Ensure current customers and new development maintain a balance between water demand and supply.

- 1.1 Appropriately coordinate the Comprehensive Plan and Water Supply Plan to ensure existing and future customers have a safe and reliable water supply.
- 1.2 Responsibly manage and conserve the city's limited water resources in both existing and new development.

WATER AND WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE



Goal UR-2 Plan, budget, operate and maintain, and construct our infrastructure to protect public health and safety.

- 2.1 Provide service consistent with established Levels of Service referencing the 2017 FOCUS Project Results or successor and applicable requirements of state regulations, Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act.
- 2.2 Monitor the Utility Condition Index (UCI) as a measurement of the amount of useful life remaining in the utility system and use the UCI to guide the Minimally Responsible Capital Improvements Project (CIP) package.
- 2.3 Prioritize public health and safety through strategic and proactive efforts to protect water quality and the environment.
- 2.4 Support coordination between city departments to maintain a link between infrastructure and various planning efforts.
- 2.5 Incorporate equity considerations, including location and costs, into infrastructure and service improvements.

RELEVANT PLANS

The following plans are incorporated by reference and are not repeated in detail:

- Transportation & Mobility Plan
- Sustainability Plan
- Water Supply Plan
- Water Conservation & Efficiency Plan

CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS



Education



Equity - Diversity and Inclusion



Health



Resilience



Safety



Climate

LANDSCAPE ORDINANCE

The landscape ordinance balances the need for aesthetic enhancement, promoting plant diversity, and tree canopy with the need to conserve water resources and minimize costs of long-term maintenance.

RECLAIMED WATER SYSTEM

Reclaimed water is wastewater that has been further treated and disinfected to provide a supply that is safe and suitable for landscape irrigation. Use of reclaimed water allows a sustainable water supply for parks and golf courses. Some additional advantages of this system include:

- Reduced demand on drinking water and scarce raw water supplies.
- Efficient use of existing facilities and city employees.
- City growth can be maintained in a responsible manner.

LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT / GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Low impact development (LID), also commonly referred to as “green stormwater infrastructure” is an approach to surface water runoff treatment and management that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle.

COST OF SERVICE



Goal UR-3 Ensure the long-term financial viability and sustainability of water and wastewater utilities.

- 3.1 Maintain an equitable tap fee and rate structure as determined by City Council.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT



Goal UR-4 Protect the community from adverse flooding and pollution impacts of runoff with efficient and progressive stormwater management practices.

- 4.1 Encourage development of regional stormwater management facilities for higher intensity land uses.
- 4.2 Encourage green stormwater infrastructure measures to reduce pollutants from development and redevelopment.
- 4.3 Coordinate storm drainage and flood management with appropriate agencies, including the Mile High Flood District (MHFD) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
- 4.4 Ensure that development and redevelopment activities are compliant with the city's Storm Drainage Design and Technical Criteria and the State's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) requirements.
- 4.5 Establish and maintain floodplain buffers to ensure compliance with FEMA required floodplain regulations, to promote water quality and to improve riparian habitat.
- 4.6 Ensure the long-term financial viability and sustainability of the stormwater utility.





SOLID WASTE



Goal UR-5 Cultivate improved waste and materials management that supports source reduction, sustainable diversion, and regulatory compliance through accessible services and programs for residential and commercial land uses. Also refer to the Sustainability Plan for additional and more specific policies.

- 5.1 Incorporate the Sustainability Plan's goal to increase reduction and recycling efforts within the city to divert solid waste from landfills.
- 5.2 Promote the importance of recycling industrial and construction waste.

UTILITIES AND SERVICES FROM OTHER PROVIDERS (NON-CITY)



Goal UR-6 Ensure all residents and businesses have access to high-quality and resilient utility systems.

- 6.1 Coordinate development review with all utility providers to ensure site improvements accommodate current and future needs for residents and businesses.
- 6.2 Continue efforts to underground electric utilities as new development occurs throughout the city.
- 6.3 Provide low-cost, effective, secure, and resilient information and communication technologies citywide.
- 6.4 Minimize surface telecommunications infrastructure site proliferation and visual impacts.

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9.0

PLAN ADMINISTRATION

This chapter provides an overview of plan compliance, management, reporting mechanisms and update protocols. Specific topics include guidance for development regulations and review, growth management and planning for future focus areas. Additionally, this section summarizes city planning efforts that will continue to influence the implementation of and future updates to the Comprehensive Plan.

**W.M.C. 11-3-2 FURTHER
ESTABLISHES CRITERIA
FOR ADOPTING THE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**

- 1. Plan Contents.** The city Council shall evaluate the plan's contents to determine that the following criteria are met:
 - a. The Plan identifies goals that are consistent with adopted city policies, plans and regulations;
 - b. The Plan is appropriate for future consultation and reference by the city Council, departments, boards and commissions;
 - c. Comments and recommendations from pertinent city departments and referral agencies have been considered; and
 - d. Issues raised by stakeholders that are outside of the city's jurisdiction have been identified.
- 2. Planning Process.** The city Council shall evaluate the planning process to determine that the following criteria are met:
 - a. The public was afforded opportunities to participate in the development of the Plan;
 - b. Appropriate municipal departments and referral agencies have reviewed the Plan; and
 - c. The Planning Commission has properly considered the Plan.

9.1 LEGAL EFFECT OF PLAN ADOPTION

Colorado home rule municipalities are self-governing under Article 20 of the Constitution of the State of Colorado; Title 31, Article 1, Section 202 of the Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.); and the home rule charter of each municipality. Municipalities and counties are authorized by C.R.S to prepare comprehensive plans as a long-range guiding document for a community to achieve its vision and goals. The comprehensive plan provides the policy framework for regulatory tools like zoning, subdivision regulations, annexations, and other policies. A comprehensive plan promotes the community's vision, goals, objectives, and policies, establishes a process for orderly growth and development, addresses both current and long-term needs, and provides for a balance between the natural and built environment. Elements addressed in a comprehensive plan may include: recreation and tourism, transportation, land use, economic development, housing, environment, parks and open space, natural and cultural resources, hazards, capital improvements, water supply and conservation, energy, and urban design.

Westminster City Charter Section 4.16 authorizes planning for the use, division, and development of land for the general purpose of protecting the public health, safety, and welfare. Furthermore, the city is authorized by Part Two of Title 31, Chapter 23, C.R.S., to make, adopt, amend, extend, add to, or carry out a master plan for the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the municipality.

Westminster Municipal Code (W.M.C.) establishes the Planning Commission and its duties, the first of which is: *The review and approval of a planning document regarding the future growth and development of the City considering the following, as applicable: population distribution and growth; local resources and finances; circulation and transportation; existing and future land usage; park, recreation and school requirements; location and capacity of public and private utilities; subdivision regulations; zoning regulations for the control of the height, area, bulk, location and use of buildings, structures and premises and the minimum areas, width and depth of lots; existing and proposed county and regional comprehensive plans; and any other factors specified by City Council.*

By setting goals and policies, the Plan establishes a vision and identifies actions needed to reach those goals. The Plan organizes the community's ideas into a single document that can be shared with residents, community partners, businesses, and future leaders. There is no specific financial commitment for implementation of the Plan but will be regularly consulted as a guide for decision-making.



9.2 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Development of property within the city shall continue to be subject to all procedures and regulations established for development pursuant to the Westminster Municipal Code (W.M.C). This shall include such considerations as site planning, architecture, parking, landscaping and other design criteria. The city conducts design review for new projects with design standards that correspond to different development typologies. These standards generally establish neighborhood-scale considerations for design, site, and building design elements. Additional guidelines may be developed for particular areas of the community with special conditions or unique opportunities.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

One of the primary intents of the Plan is to provide information, guidance, and direction for future development. The Planning Manager is authorized by W.M.C. to interpret the Plan in specific cases and determine compliance.

Implementation of and alignment with the Plan's four guiding principles and the other goals and policies will be key considerations during review of future development proposals. While there is a desire for flexibility and the ability to respond quickly to high-quality projects and changing market demands, there is also a responsibility to focus on creating and maintaining a variety of great neighborhoods; supporting a stable and diverse job base; and providing green spaces and opportunities for arts and culture. As projects are reviewed and competing issues arise, it will be the responsibility of the approving authority to balance these needs to meet all four guiding principles of the Plan.

Determining compliance with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan requires a review of the proposal against the land use character types and the other goals and policies of the Plan. The following criteria have been developed for use during the review process to determine whether or not a proposed development is achieving the vision and goals established in this Plan and thus meeting W.M.C. requirements.

1. Does the proposed development generally advance the four guiding principles contained in the Comprehensive Plan?
2. Is the proposed development supportive of the form and use requirements established for the applicable land use character type?
3. Will the proposed development strengthen the character of the area by:
 - a. providing appropriate infill development and, if applicable, removing obsolete development that does not contribute to the quality of the surrounding area;





- b. adding to the mix of uses to support a neighborhood unit and/or contribute to the vitality of an activity center;
 - c. improving the streetscape and connectivity within the area; and
 - d. meeting or exceeding the development quality of the surrounding area?
4. Does the proposed development provide appropriate transitions between uses? In more urban locations these transitions should generally be accomplished by design elements that allow adjacent buildings to be in close proximity to one another. In suburban locations these transitions should be addressed through separation of uses and/or buffering.

9.3 PLAN MANAGEMENT

To keep implementation of the Comprehensive Plan on track and demonstrate progress towards desired community outcomes, it is the responsibility of the Planning Manager, in coordination with the City Council and Planning Commission, to periodically review and report out on the Plan's status. This includes a cycle of reflecting on the implementation status and achievements, and also making periodic adjustments to the Plan to ensure that it remains relevant and applicable.

On a regular basis, the Planning Division should meet to discuss plan implementation progress and challenges, gather ideas to inform the development of the Biennial Report, and identify issues to be considered for potential plan amendments.

UPDATING AND AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Because the 2040 Comprehensive Plan is ahead of other key Westminster Forward plans, an update to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan is recommended, following completion of the other plans. This update may include items such as minor updates to goals and policies to ensure alignment and consistency with the other plans. A public engagement process to support the first update will not likely be necessary (since the other plans will be developed through coordinated engagement processes), unless new policy ideas emerge that need to be reviewed and vetted with the broader Westminster community.

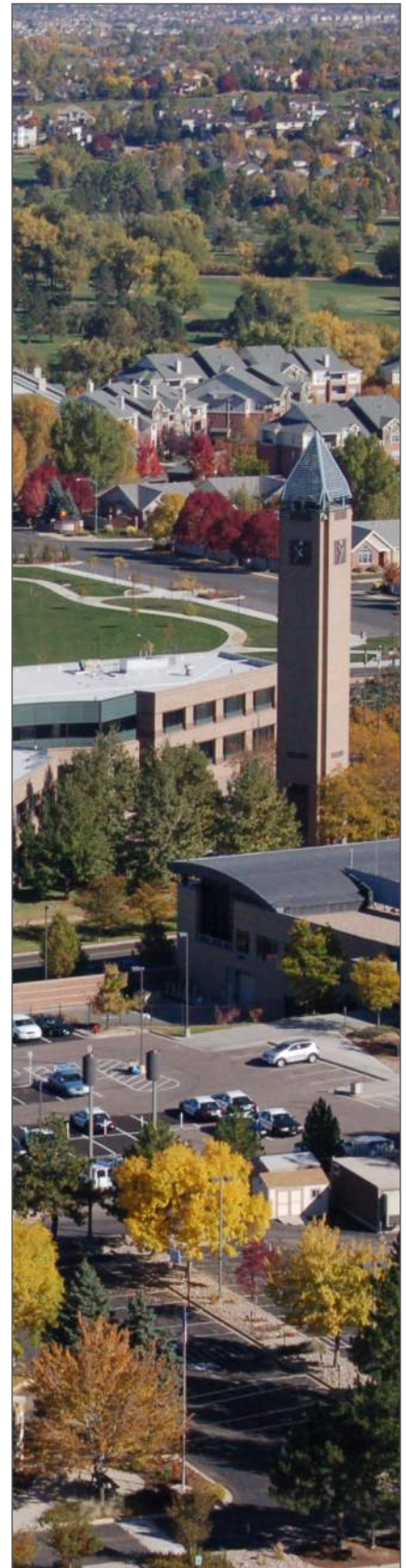
City Council and Planning Commission may review, identify, and adopt amendments to the Comprehensive Plan throughout its planning horizon so that current issues continue to be addressed and to ensure that the Plan provides a realistic guide for the community's future growth. Amendments could include periodic updates to major functional (system) plans and area plan elements that serve to support the Plan.



The Planning Commission is responsible for reviewing and recommending Plan updates and amendments with final adoption by City Council, following a public hearing by both bodies. The amendment will be reviewed in accordance with the approval criteria established by W.M.C.

Plan Amendment Approval Criteria:

1. The proposed amendment is consistent with the vision, intent and applicable policies of the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted plans, policies and guidelines.
2. The proposed amendment serves a substantial public purpose and will not be substantially detrimental to the surrounding lands.
3. The proposed amendment minimizes the nature and degree of impacts on neighboring lands; The proposed amendment is needed to address substantially changed conditions in the immediate area of the subject tract since adoption of the Comprehensive Plan or an error or omission contained in that document.
4. The proposed amendment provides for the orderly physical growth of the city.
5. The proposed amendment furthers an important public policy, such as a need for affordable housing, protection of historic resources, preservation of open space, or reduction in water demand by virtue of a different land use category or the city's adopted sustainability policies.
6. The proposed amendment is appropriate to address a uniqueness in the size, shape and character of the parcel in relation to neighboring lands. Proof that a small parcel is unsuitable for use as presently designated or that there have been substantial changes in the immediate area may justify an amendment subject to evidence furnished by the applicant.
7. The proposed amendment will not cause the transportation system, drainage, water and sewer infrastructure, water supply, fire and police services, or the parks and open space system, to exceed their design capacity.
8. The proposed amendment will not cause a net negative reduction in the city's general fund revenue, considering increased tax revenues and increased infrastructure and public service costs associated with the application.
9. The proposed amendment will not negatively impact the design capacity of public services or public infrastructure provided by referral agencies such as the Colorado Department of Transportation, local school districts, the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport, or other agencies pertinent to the location and nature of the requested amendment.
10. The proposed amendment establishes minimal environmental impacts or has sufficiently mitigated any identified impacts.



BIENNIAL REPORTS

Preparation of a Biennial Report to summarize implementation, issues, and next steps will help provide organization to the implementation process. The Planning Manager will oversee the development of the Biennial Report to review actions taken within the reporting period in support of the Comprehensive Plan. The report will identify projects in progress or completed, supporting plans developed, updated, or amended, enhancements or additions to city programs or services, new partnerships or intergovernmental agreements, and proposed regulatory updates adopted to help Westminster realize attainment of the Plan's four guiding principles. The Biennial Report will also identify plan amendments adopted during the reporting period, upcoming amendments for future consideration, new or revised City Council budgeting or strategic planning priorities, and a summary of key development review activities. Future reports may also include the latest status of indicators identified in the performance monitoring section of this chapter. The report does not constitute a plan amendment, but may be considered when making future plan updates.



*Photo credit: Ron Booth
Westminster Station*



9.4 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

A preliminary list of major initiatives to further the vision and policies of the Comprehensive Plan was developed as part of the Westminster Forward engagement and plan development process. A review of the projects will occur biennially, and in conjunction with budgeting and capital planning, at which point adjustments and additions may be made. The initiatives are identified in the Implementation Action Plan and are intended to provide guidance in the development of strategic and capital improvement plans, and in the budget development process.

RESOURCING IMPLEMENTATION

The city's budget reflects careful preparation according to City Council goals, the Strategic Plan and citywide objectives. The budget process emphasizes long-range planning, budgeting for results, effective program management and fiscal responsibility. It is the city's policy to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to preserve existing assets and programs before targeting resources toward additional assets and programs, especially those that have ongoing maintenance obligations.

Successful implementation of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan may require making some incremental shifts in city existing staffing and current resource commitments, exploring new revenue streams and funding mechanisms, pursuing outside resources like community partnerships, and allocating future staffing and resources to support strategy implementation actions. These shifts and adjustments must happen within the larger context of the city's overall budget process. Some preliminary ideas about resource opportunities and needs for each of these categories are summarized below.

Examples of Incremental Shifts with Existing Staff and Resources

- Educational and awareness campaigns
- Integrating Comprehensive Plan policies into Development Code updates
- Incorporate tracking and monitoring activities into existing roles

Examples of New Revenue Streams and Funding Mechanisms

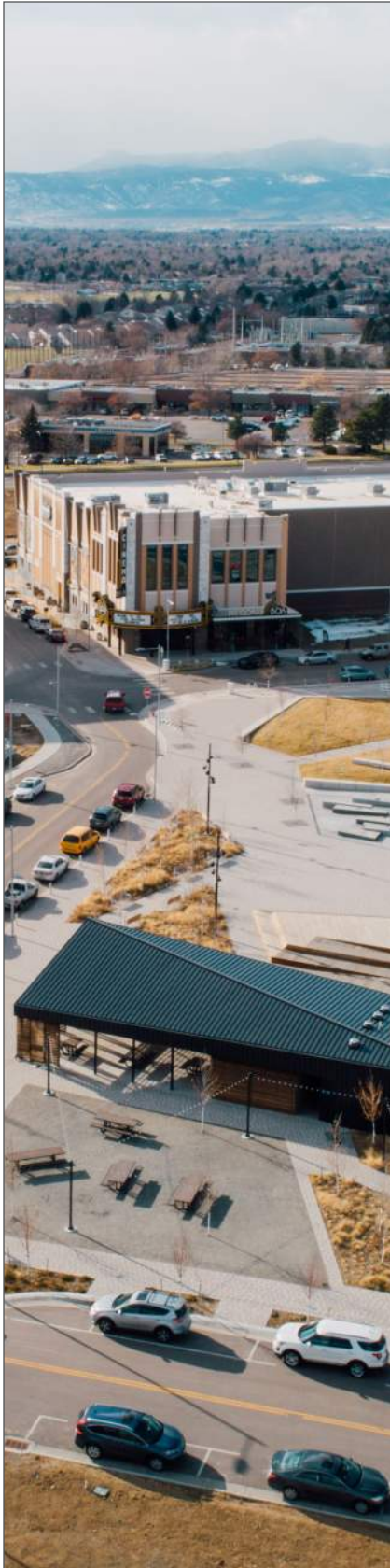
- Identifying revenue diversification
- Utility revenue strategies

Examples of Outside Resources

- Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)
- Adams and Jefferson Counties



Water Main Replacement



9.5 GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The city's Growth Management Program was originally established in 1978 to aid the city in balancing growth with the ability to provide and expand services including water, water treatment, sewer, police, fire, and parks and recreation. Since the adoption of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, the Growth Management Program has been updated to remove the residential service competition, relying instead on Comprehensive Plan compliance, codified design standards, and criteria for amendments to the Plan. Currently, all city departments are invited to participate in the development process to ensure that appropriate infrastructure and services are available. Additionally, the city has a number of tools to manage growth and may consider new and/or alternative tools in future years. The existing toolkit is listed below.

LAND MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Annexation. The city's policy is to annex strategic locations that support vision attainment and financial sustainability. Official land use designation for these areas will either occur at time of annexation or as part of a development plan for proposed annexation areas.

Development Agreements. A voluntary contract between the city and a person who owns or controls property, detailing the obligations of both parties and specifying the standards and conditions that will govern development of the property.

Zoning. Zoning requirements work in tandem with the recommendations made within the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Diagram. Zoning is the regulatory tool of which development will comply with. Any changes to zoning should be in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Specific Plan Districts (SPD). A zoning scheme available for Focus Areas to define land uses, building forms, street typologies, amenities and other elements to contribute to a cohesive identity for the district. As a regulatory incentive, having a SPD in place allows projects to bypass typical zoning procedures and proceed to development plans. See also Section 9.6.

Subdivision. A group of regulations to ensure that proposed division of property into lots for development are buildable; can be accessed safely by residents and/or occupants; are designed to be serviced by emergency responders and solid waste collection; and provide adequate environmental controls that are formalized through a "plat" recorded with the County Clerk and Recorder. This public record in the form of a plat ensures buyers a property is eligible for building permits and connections to utilities. The plat also formalizes facilities that the city or other entity may be accepting for ownership and/or maintenance such as a street, stormwater facility, or park site.



Historic Landmark Designation. In conjunction with the Historic Preservation Ordinance, and under guidance from the Historic Landmark Board, this type of designation can assist in recognizing and preserving the city's past as a significant part of the community.

Exactions (Public Land Dedication (PLD), Park Development Fee, and School Land Dedication). Exactions are land and/or fees collected by the city for residential development or redevelopment, and used to fund community infrastructure, service improvements, and maintenance. Generally, low densities cover a higher acreage of land, and generate less money for PLD versus higher densities occupying less land area, but generating more units and therefore result in greater value. PLD is often used for park purposes but may be used for other municipal facility needs such as utilities, fire, or libraries. The Park Development Fee supplements PLD with funds to ensure public parks in or near a development may be improved with facilities to meet the needs of future residents. School Land Dedication provides the local school district the option of either accepting land for a school site or funds to improve existing schools that will serve a development. All three types of exactions are annually reviewed and adjusted to the consumer price index. Non-residential development is not subject to these exactions.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

Economic Development Agreements (EDA). Economic development agreements provide assistance from government entities in exchange for meeting economic development goals. This assistance may be in the form of cash, loans, tax exemptions, or other benefits, and may be conditioned on the achievement of hiring targets or other milestones.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Tax increment financing is a public financing method intended to stimulate private investment within a geographic zone designated in need of economic revitalization. This type of financing tool can leverage funds for public improvement within the boundaries of the zone.

Opportunity Zones (OZ). Opportunity zones are economically-distressed areas where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment. Designation as an Opportunity Zone may be initiated by a locality, but requires sign off at the state and federal level.

Enterprise Zones (EZ). The Colorado Enterprise Zone Program was created by the Colorado Legislature to promote a business-friendly environment in economically distressed areas by offering state income tax credits that incentivize businesses to locate and develop in - and non-profit organizations to assist with the needs of these communities.

Jobs-Housing Balance. A jobs-housing ratio of 1:1 is widely considered a good indicator of a healthy, balanced community, with one job per employed resident within a municipality. This



*Restored Savery Savory
Mushroom Water Tank*



Harris Park Streetscape Improvements

balance indicates availability of both jobs and housing within an area, limiting commute-shed, allowing for a range of housing, and access to jobs. In consideration of Westminster's geographical boundaries and location within the US 36 Corridor, a jobs-housing balance must be considered in the context of available housing and employment opportunities within the larger region.

Management of City-Owned Properties. The City of Westminster owns and maintains many properties throughout the city. While facilities such as parks, fire stations, or libraries may be most visible there are a number of properties owned and intended for future development in the support of the city's Vision. Downtown Westminster is one prominent example of which city-owned property has been used to partner with private development. City ownership provides the opportunity to partner with private developers to create unique projects that support needs such as affordable housing, employment opportunities or experiential uses that contribute to quality of life.

Small Business Assistance. The city offers a variety of programs and resources for small businesses in Westminster. The Capital Projects Grant Program and Scholarship Program both provide reimbursement to qualifying small businesses for property improvements, training expenses, and more. The city also partners with the North Metro Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to offer resources to new and existing small businesses.

9.6 SPECIFIC PLANS

Specific plans are specific programs of zoning, capital improvements and programming for Focus Areas identified in this Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of these plans is to ensure that development is planned and designed cohesively with a synergistic mix of uses; connected, multimodal circulation system; access to transit and public amenities; and adequate provision of public utilities and services. The location and boundaries of each focus area are identified in Map 2-1 in Chapter 2.

The City of Westminster will coordinate planning efforts for each focus area and determine the appropriate time for plan preparation. The plans typically include a cohesive vision for land use, urban design, multimodal circulation, public amenities and adequate utilities and services. Upon completion, each specific plan with associated rezoning or updates to the Comprehensive Plan, if applicable, will be adopted by City Council and incorporated by reference into the Comprehensive Plan. Existing, adopted specific plans include the [Downtown Specific Plan](#) and [Westminster Station Area Specific Plan](#).



9.7 RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PLANS & POLICY DOCUMENTS

The City of Westminster has an extensive history of planning for the future, and local and regional planning efforts—both existing and upcoming—guide various aspects of the city’s growth and development. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan is one of the city’s highest-level policy documents, used to guide city leaders and staff in making long-range decisions. Even though this Plan covers a range of topics, it does not provide specific level of detail for all topics or all geographic areas within the city. The Plan is long-term in nature and separate from routine and/or immediate business needs; therefore, it may be used in conjunction with other city plans and documents. Generally, the 2040 Comprehensive Plan should be consulted when considering decisions that have long-term planning considerations. Other city plans generally provide more detail on short- and mid-term priorities and site-specific standards.

Strategic Plan

The city’s Strategic Plan is updated annually and used across the organization to reinforce the vision for day-to-day operations, services, and long-term capital investment projects like road construction, water distribution and sewer maintenance. It is reviewed regularly to inform the budgets for both capital improvement projects and operational resources. While the Strategic Plan is short-term and more operational in nature, ensuring alignment between the Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Plan concepts was an objective of the update process.

Other City of Westminster Plans

Currently, the city is directed by nearly 50 different plans. These include master plans such as the Parks, Recreation, and Libraries Plan and the Transportation & Mobility Plan, as well as specific area plans like the Downtown Specific Plan and the Westminster Station Area Specific Plan. Providing even more detail, many city departments produce strategic plans or work programs to outline their priorities.

In all cases, these plans should consider the overall direction and intent outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Where conflicts arise, a very general rule of thumb is that the more current or specific the plan is, the more they should be relied upon, especially when balancing sometimes competing policy and priority directions.

Chapter 2 provides more detail on relevant special area plans for the Focus and Transition Areas. Additionally, Chapters 3 through 8 include callouts of relevant plans. These callouts help direct the reader to find more information on the topics addressed in the chapter.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Land Use & Development



CITY PLANS

- Specific Area Plans
 - Westminster Station
 - Downtown Westminster
- Unified Development Code
- Preliminary & Official Development Plans

EXTERNAL PARTNER PLANS

- DRCOG Metro Vision
- Adams & Jefferson County Comprehensive Plans
- North Plains Area Plan
- Rocky Mountain Metro Airport Environs Land Use Plan
- Arvada, Broomfield, Federal Heights, Northglenn, and Thornton Comprehensive Plans

Transportation, Mobility & Connections



- Transportation & Mobility Plan
- Bicycle Master Plan
- Roadway Master Plan
- Mobility Action Plan
- Trail Master Plan

- RTD plans
- CDOT plans

Health, Wellness & Community Services



- Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan
- Library Master Plan
- Open Space Stewardship Plan
- Arts & Culture Plan
- Individual park master plans
- Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Public Safety plans

- Hyland Hills Parks & Rec District Master Plan

Economic & Financial Resilience



- Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Urban Renewal Plans
- Economic Base & Industry Opportunities report

Housing & Neighborhoods



- Neighborhood Plans
- Harris Park
- Affordable & Workforce Housing Strategic Plan
- CDBG Consolidated Plan

- Foothills Regional Housing plans
- Maiker Housing Partner plans

Utilities & Resources



- Water Supply Plan
- Water Efficiency Plan
- Drought Management Plan
- Other Utility Plans
- Stormwater Program/MS4 Permit

- Colorado Water Plan
- Mile High Flood District plans

Supporting Documents



- Strategic Plan
- Capital Improvement Plan
- Municipal Budget
- Westminster Municipal Code
- Individual department strategic plans
- Intergovernmental Agreements



The Sustainability Plan is also a high-level policy document for the city, with a focus on actions that can be implemented within the next 5-10 years as part of the city's vision.

Westminster Municipal Code

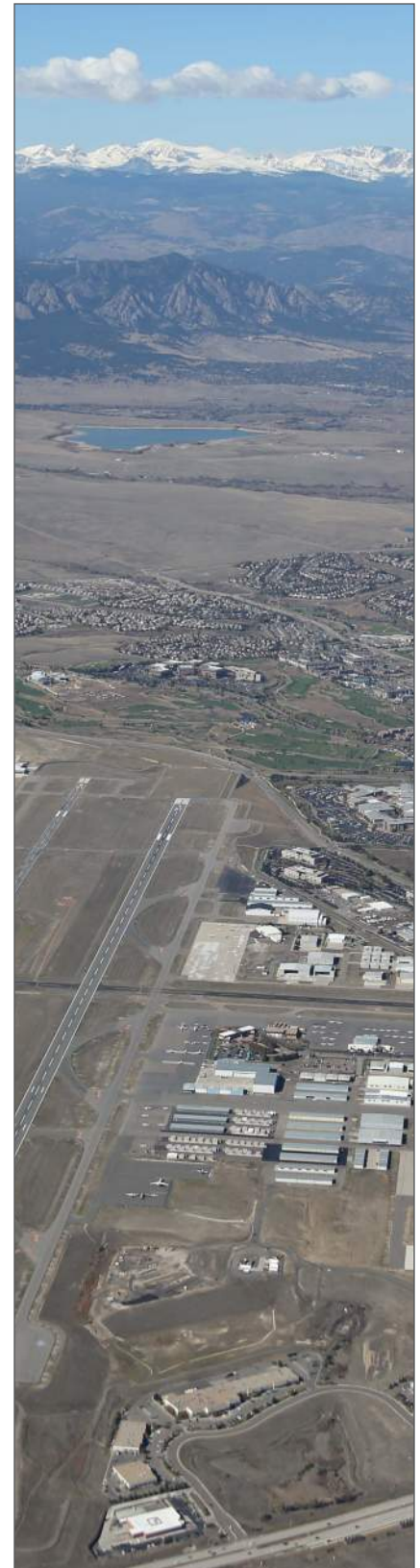
Westminster Municipal Code (W.M.C.) is the official code of ordinances governing the city. A companion effort to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan is Code Forward, which will result in a Unified Development Code (UDC) to provide an implementation tool within the W.M.C.. These regulations will greater specify allowable uses of land within Westminster, as well as the physical standards of a development's scale, form and appearance. The UDC should correspond to the intent of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan to ensure that incremental development decisions reflect the community's vision. One of the benefits of the UDC will be to increase transparency in the development process, which will be supported in three key areas: first, by consolidating regulations and policies to improve accessibility; second, by establishing zoning that aligns with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan; and finally, by documenting consistent and fair procedures to assist project applicants and the general public.

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for making responsible decisions that reflect the desires of the community and encourage continuity and compatibility among neighborhoods. All land use applications should be reviewed not only for conformance with W.M.C. requirements, but also for alignment with the direction and guidance provided by the Comprehensive Plan.

Regional Planning Efforts

Planning efforts by surrounding municipalities and counties, as well as those regarding the US 36 Corridor, the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport, and the Regional Transportation District also have direct impacts on Westminster's future, and require effective regional collaboration. These regional plans are generally considered in areas that share a political boundary or include development projects that will have a regional impact.

Adams County: The County's Comprehensive Plan (2012) encourages new urban residential growth in unincorporated infill areas and within municipal and county growth areas to reduce impacts to the County and maximize access to services and existing infrastructure. The plan also focuses its efforts on attracting new industrial and employment uses in both incorporated and unincorporated areas, and emphasizes annexation of enclaves into municipalities. The Adams County Comprehensive Plan incorporates a Transportation Plan and Hazard Mitigation Plan. Subsequently, the County prepared a Federal Boulevard Framework Plan to thoughtfully manage growth and redevelopment anticipated with pending openings of rail lines in southwest Adams County. Completed in tandem with a Health Impact Assessment, the Framework Plan evaluated the corridor in terms of urban design and streetscape environments,



*Rocky Mountain
Metropolitan Airport*

bicycle and pedestrian safety, the context of market feasibility, and engagement of the communities along the corridor. Additionally, the County adopted a Balanced Housing Plan in 2018 focused on changes that could be made at the County level to provide better housing outcomes, including the expansion and leveraging of existing resources, balancing supply with demand through incentives and flexible regulations, maintaining existing affordable housing stock, decreasing the affordability gap through better wages, and providing greater predictability and the development process. The Westminster 2040 Comprehensive Plan will need to recognize the County's planning concepts and proactively engage with the County on sites adjacent to the City Limits that may support the city's goals, such as adjacent to Westminster Station.

City of Arvada: The City of Arvada adjoins Westminster along the southern and western boundaries of the city. The City of Arvada's Comprehensive Plan (2014) calls for primarily commercial development at key nodes along Wadsworth Boulevard and Sheridan Boulevard, with residential for the remainder of the border. Arvada established a new Land Development Code in 2020, and through the remapping of zoning at a citywide level, a number of amendments to the Comprehensive Plan have been identified as a result of a parcel-by-parcel analysis. Consultation with Arvada staff resulted in adjustments to areas identified in the Annexation Appendix.

City and County of Broomfield: Westminster shares a partial northern and western boundary with the City and County of Broomfield. Broomfield's Comprehensive Plan (2016) emphasizes revitalization of the area's older commercial and industrial uses along Main Street (which turns into Westminster Boulevard in Westminster to the south). With statutorily defined boundaries, Broomfield is focusing on infill and redevelopment, as well as reinvestment in its older neighborhoods. However, it is also actively developing the interchange at State Highway 7 and I-25 as a regional commercial center at its northeastern corner, which has a strong influence on the North I-25 corridor, and the Arista neighborhood on US 36, which is adjacent to Westminster's Church Ranch Focus Area.

Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT): CDOT recently completed a 2040 Statewide Transportation Plan. This plan provides a blueprint for improving the state's transportation system over the next 10 to 25 years and includes goals and objectives to enhance safety, mobility, maintenance and economic vitality in the state's transportation system. The plan integrates 15 Regional Transportation Plans, including DRCOG, and incorporates advance planning for transit, bike and pedestrian travel, aviation, freight, asset management, operations, and safety. As with the City of Westminster, a key challenge in future years will be identifying funding for maintenance and/or replacement of existing infrastructure.



DRCOG Metro Vision: The City of Westminster is one of 46 communities that signed the Mile High Compact, a voluntary agreement among metro area cities and counties to manage growth and ensure consistency with regional planning efforts by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG). Last updated in 2017, the DRCOG's Metro Vision 2040 Plan outlines that regional direction for land use and transportation planning throughout the Denver metropolitan region. The Metro Vision 2040 Plan establishes five Urban Centers in Westminster —North I-25, South Westminster (Westminster Station), West 120th Avenue (West 120th Avenue Activity Center), Downtown Westminster, and Westminster Promenade (Church Ranch). An Urban Center is defined by DRCOG as a multimodal, dense, and mixed-use development node that provides a balance of jobs and housing units. Metro Vision uses Urban Centers as the basis for decision making about regional growth, in particular the formation of a regional transportation system. These five Urban Centers roughly correspond to the Focus Areas defined in Westminster's Comprehensive Plan with two exceptions: DRCOG does not identify the Brookhill Focus Area, but rather calls out the West 120th Avenue Activity Center, which Westminster's Comprehensive Plan does not.

Jefferson County: Currently being updated, the County's Comprehensive Master Plan is comprised of multiple area plans and comprehensive development plans that guide land use and physical planning throughout the county. Westminster is located within the County's North Plains Area Plan, which provides direction for unincorporated land surrounded by the city, much of which is located in enclaves along the Wadsworth Boulevard corridor. With the update underway, the County has prioritized updates to policies related to water and mixed-use development for the first phase, followed by work in the South Plains Area. Therefore, it is important that unincorporated areas adjacent to Westminster are considered in the city's 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

City of Federal Heights: The City of Federal Heights borders Westminster to the east along Federal Boulevard between West 84th and 104th Avenues. Land along Federal Boulevard is primarily zoned commercial and includes many established commercial centers, as well as some significant vacant land along Federal Boulevard between West 96th Avenue and 103rd Avenue, where an airport was once in operation. To the east, the border between the two cities along Zuni Street includes Water World and industrial areas. Federal Heights receives 96% of its water from Westminster through a contractual obligation. It must be noted that water supply planning impacts more than just Westminster, but also residents of surrounding communities such as Federal Heights.



Sheridan Park n Ride

Hyland Hills Park and Recreation District: The district completed a new master plan in 2020 that identified future parks and recreation needs, opportunities and districtwide enhancements. New park and facility locations are identified, as well as implementation elements that identify costs, prioritization, and funding strategies. This plan includes numerous parks and facilities located in Westminster east of Sheridan Boulevard and south of West 120th Avenue, as well as locations in Adams County outside of Westminster that residents may enjoy, such as Water World.

City of Northglenn: The City of Northglenn abuts a portion of the eastern boundary of Westminster between West 104th and 120th Avenues. Northglenn's Comprehensive Plan (2010) designates the Huron Street and 120th Avenue corridors with primarily single family residential and some commercial use. Northglenn recently completed a Unified Development Ordinance, the first significant update to its land use codes in over 40 years. This effort focused on improving site plan procedures, water conservation standards, and alignment with the remaining land inventory with an eye to infill and redevelopment.

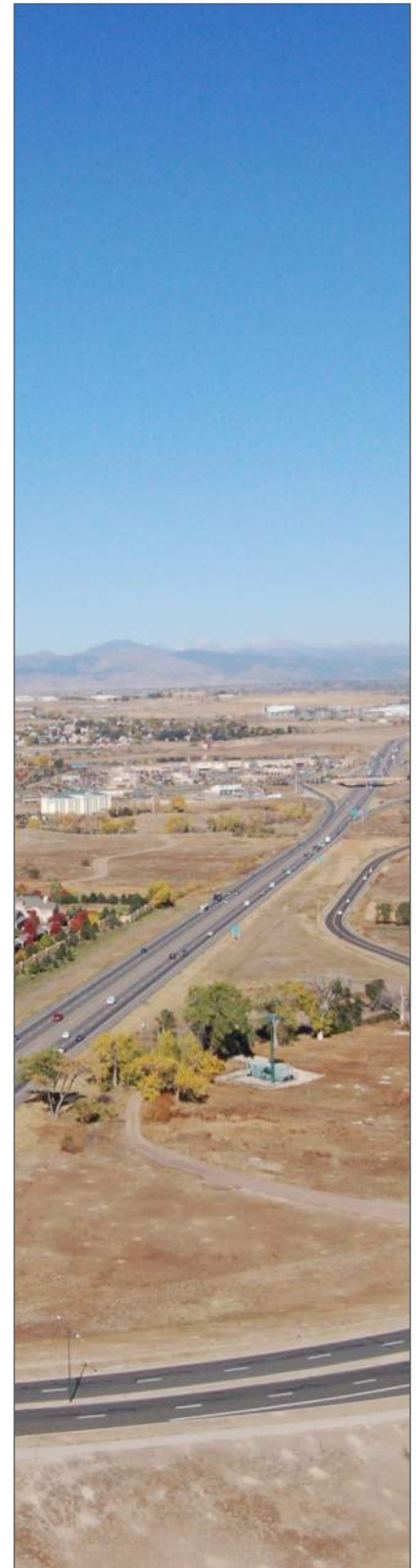
Regional Transportation District (RTD): The district recently completed a First and Last Mile (FLM) Strategic Plan. The plan defined strategies and policies to improve multimodal transportation and connectivity to RTD services and facilities with the goal of making RTD more accessible to more people. The plan aims to improve transit accessibility by empowering local jurisdictions, transportation management associations (TMAs), and other partners to understand the range of FLM solutions that are available and then applies those solutions to specific station areas. The FLM highlighted 15 locations across the RTD service area with recommendations to improve access to transit – two of these are within Westminster at Sheridan Station and Wagon Road Park-n-Ride.

Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport: The Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport is located northwest of Westminster's city limits. Jefferson County owns and operates the airport and completed an update to the airport's master plan in 2011. The master plan provides projections for airport operations and development on airport-owned land, as well as land use guidance through the Environs Land Use Plan for lands within its Airport Influence Area and, most importantly, within its Instrument Critical Zone. In addition to the approach zones, sites in the vicinity of the airport are impacted by student pilot training, forming a racetrack pattern of low flying air traffic. Proper consideration of appropriate land uses adjacent to the airport will be critical with the Westminster 2040 Comprehensive Plan.



City of Thornton: The City of Thornton shares the I-25 corridor boundary at the northeast end of Westminster. The cities participate in a retail sales tax revenue sharing agreement along I-25 between West 128th and 150th Avenues to the south and north, and Huron and Washington streets to the west and east. The agreement supports growth of commercial and employment uses in both cities. Thornton's 2020 Comprehensive Plan designates much of the northern I-25 corridor as Employment Center and Regional Mixed-Use east of Westminster's city limits. The Regional Mixed-Use area between West 144th and 136th Avenues is intended to attract people from Thornton and the surrounding region with large format office, retail, services, and recreational attractions. To activate these areas, high density residential is planned as a supporting use. Areas closer to E-470 and at West 120th Avenue are intended to accommodate diverse employment and large distribution warehouse uses. The majority of Thornton's vacant commercial lands are in these areas along I-25, which is also where the majority of new development projects have gravitated in recent years. It is important to understand how this shared market shed influences opportunities on the Westminster side of I-25.

US 36 Corridor: The Northwest Area Mobility Study (NAMS) represents consensus between RTD, CDOT, corridor stakeholders and local jurisdictions on short and long-term transit improvements in the corridor. The document identifies five major priorities. As a component of the voter-approved 2004 FasTracks program, the Northwest Corridor improvements along US 36 include a commuter rail line from Denver's Union Station, enhanced bus service and infrastructure, and a managed toll/high occupancy vehicle/bus lane. These improvements provide improved multimodal transportation options between Boulder and Denver, and benefit existing development and enhance future development opportunities around the Westminster Center and Church Ranch park-and-rides. Commuting Solutions is a non-profit organization that focuses on providing alternatives to commuters in the US 36 Corridor and works to identify partners and funding for the five priorities of the NAMS. Most recently, Commuting Solutions completed the First and Final Mile Study to identify strategies to get commuters to and from US 36 transit facilities and minimize single occupant vehicle usage. In addition, Commuting Solutions, RTD and the adjacent municipalities partnered to complete wayfinding along the corridor and secure funding for bike-n-ride shelters.



US 36 Corridor

9.8 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Comprehensive Plan is shaped by the vision and a set of guiding principles that state the community's aspirations for the future. Indicators (see Appendix C, Community Indicators) are established to help monitor the Plan's performance and progress towards achieving the vision, guiding principles, and goals. Indicators help track and communicate progress, and can also serve as alerts to emerging problems or challenges.

9.9 GOALS & POLICIES

The following goals and policies provide direction for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. Goals are defined as desired ideals and values to be sought. Policies articulate a course of action that guides governmental decision-making to meet the goal.

Goal PA-1 Implement the Plan after adoption.

- 1.1 Unite the city, other governmental entities, non-profits, businesses, and the community's strong citizenry to raise awareness of the Plan.
- 1.2 Consult the Plan in municipal decision making when appropriate.
- 1.3 Review and update the Plan as needed.



A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACRONYMS

ADU	Accessory Dwelling Unit
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AV	Autonomous Vehicle
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
CPTED	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
DRCOG	Denver Regional Council of Governments
EMS	Emergency Medical Service
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
FAR	Floor Area Ratio
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GMA	Growth Management Area
HUD	United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
IGA	Intergovernmental Agreement
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LOS	Level of Service
PUD	Planned Unit Development
RTD	Regional Transportation District
SPD	Specific Plan District
TOD	Transit-Oriented Development
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TIF	Tax Increment Finance
TMP	Transportation & Mobility Plan
UDC	Unified Development Code
URA	Urban Renewal Area
VMT	Vehicle Miles Travelled
W.M.C.	Westminster Municipal Code

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Where not defined here, please consult Westminster Municipal Code for a definition.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU): a smaller, independent residential dwelling unit located on the same lot as a stand-alone (i.e., detached) single-family home. ADUs go by many different names throughout the U.S., including accessory apartments, secondary suites, and granny flats. ADUs can be converted portions of existing homes (i.e., internal ADUs), additions to new or existing homes (i.e., attached ADUs), or new stand-alone accessory structures or converted portions of existing stand-alone accessory structures (i.e., detached ADUs).

Active Living: A way of life in which physical, social, mental, emotional and spiritual activities are valued and are integrated into daily living (Source: World Health Organization). In planning terms, active living communities are communities that facilitate opportunities for active living.

Active Recreation: Recreational activities that require the use of organized play areas, such as playing fields, swimming pools, and basketball courts. Contrasted to “passive recreation” which does not require the use of such areas.

Activity Centers: A general term for established higher density mixed-use or employment centers that integrate a range of uses and activities which complement and support each other. A small grouping of commercial uses is not an activity center.

Adaptive Management: A structured, iterative process of robust decision making in the face of uncertainty, with an aim to reducing uncertainty over time via system monitoring.

Adaptive Reuse: A process through which an older building or site, particularly one with historic value, is rehabilitated or adapted to meet current codes and respond to current market demand for commercial or residential space.

Affordable Housing: shall mean a new proposed residential development consisting of any combination of single-family attached, single-family detached, and multi-family dwelling units, regardless of the age of occupants, provided that 50 percent or more of the units serve households earning from zero to 80 percent of the regional Area Median Income (AMI) as defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Airport Influence Area: An area that recognizes the benefits and potentially adverse impacts that occur within certain distances from public aviation facilities and that provides a policy framework to minimize these impacts as well as protect the safety and efficiency of aircraft operations.

Alternative Energy Technology: Technology that facilitates the use of renewable (non-fossil fuel) energy resources. Alternative energy sources include sunlight, wind, cogeneration, and biomass.

Alternative Fuels: Fuels that are not petroleum based, such as compressed natural gas, liquid petroleum gas, hydrogen, coal-derived liquid fuels, fuels other than alcohols derived from biological materials, electricity, or any other fuel that is substantially not petroleum and would yield substantial energy security and environmental benefits.

Amendment: A formal City Council change or revision to the Comprehensive Plan, including either the Plan's text or its maps.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Federal legislation specifying provisions to be made in the design (or redesign) of buildings, parking, and outdoor areas to remove barriers for persons with disabilities and guaranteeing equal opportunity in public accommodations, transportation and government services.

Annexation: The process by which land is added to the city in accordance with the provisions of the Colorado Revised Statutes and code.

Arterial : A street classification. Arterials are usually high-volume streets that travel through the community, connecting smaller streets to highways. Arterials include:

- **Major Arterials:** Streets that provide a high degree of mobility and serve corridor movements with longer trip lengths. Access to adjacent properties along major arterials is limited to emphasize mobility of vehicles.
- **Minor Arterials:** Streets that provide for trips of moderate length and offer connectivity to streets of higher function classification. Minor arterials provide intra-community continuity

See also "Collector"

Autonomous Vehicles (AV): Instead of a driver controlling the vehicle's movement, autonomous vehicles are operated through various technologies including sensors, real-time data processing and algorithm calculations to position and move the vehicle.

Auto-Oriented Uses: Functional activities of two types: 1) those that are auto-related such as gas stations and vehicle service and repair shops; and 2) those which by their design attract primarily customers and employees arriving by automobile such as uses with drive-throughs lanes.

Bicycle Facilities: Improvements and provisions to accommodate or encourage bicycling including bike parking infrastructure and bike lanes.

Buildout: The point at which a community's land has been fully developed exclusive of land preserved for parks, open space, rights of way, and other public property..

Buildable area: The remaining area of land after the area for roads, detention ponds, parking lots, easements, dedications (i.e., schools, open space) is deducted.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): A bus transit mode that combines the quality of rail transit and the flexibility of buses. BRT typically provides high-frequency services and operates in exclusive bus lanes or HOV lanes. A BRT system combines a simple route layout, frequent service, limited stops, passenger information systems, transit signal priority, high-quality vehicles, rapid and convenient fare collection, high-quality passenger facilities .

FlexRide (formally Call-N-Ride): Available to the public, this reservation-based shared ride curb to curb service between transit stations, Park-n-Rides, and destinations such as shopping centers, businesses and schools.

Capital Improvement Programs (CIP): A mechanism within government for identifying, financing, scheduling and constructing significant public improvements.

Chronic Homelessness: A chronically homeless individual or family has a head of household who has been living outdoors, in a shelter or area not intended for human habitation for at least a year or on at least four separate occasions in the last three years. To be chronically homeless, the person must also have a diagnosable substance abuse disorder, serious mental health illness, developmental disability, post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from a brain injury, or a chronic physical illness or disability.

City Council: A seven member elected body including the Mayor, who represent the citizens of Westminster. City Council is the final approval authority for many types of development and land use related matters.

Cluster Development: A method of land development designed to preserve open space. Given a fixed number of dwelling units allowed on a specific property, cluster development allows the fixed number of dwelling units to be concentrated in one area of the property as opposed to evenly distributed, creating a separate larger public space rather than a group of small private spaces within individual lots.

Collector: a street that carries traffic from minor streets to the arterial street system, including the principal entrance streets of residential developments and the primary circulating streets within such developments. Collectors provide a balance between access and mobility and retain continuity through neighborhoods.

Community: Within this document, “community” or “Westminster community” refers to all people, businesses, organizations, etc. within the City of Westminster limits or those who are directly affected by the affairs of the City of Westminster.

Complete Streets: Complete Streets are streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are travelling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or transit riders. The concept of Complete Streets encompasses many approaches to planning, designing,

and operating roadways and rights of way with all users in mind to make the transportation network safer and more efficient.

Comprehensive Plan: A citywide long-range plan intended to guide the growth and development of a community that includes analysis, recommendations and proposals for such topics as the community's population, economy, land use, housing, transportation and community facilities.

Commuter Rail: A rail system that carries passengers within urban areas, or between urban areas and their suburbs, but differs from light rail transit in that the passenger cars are heavier, the average trip lengths are longer, and the operations can be carried out over tracks that are part of the railroad system. In Westminster, the B-Line is an example of commuter rail.

Concurrency: The practice of providing all services (roads, water, sewer, fire, police, parks, etc.) necessary to sustain a development at the time that the development is constructed and occupied.

Co-Working: Work activities occurring in flexible workspaces shared by people who are self-employed or working for different employers.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED): The proper design and effective use of the built environment that can lead to a reduction in the fear or and incidence of crime and an improvement of the quality of life. See also Chapter 5 of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Critical Support Services: The service centers, industries and city services necessary to meet the fundamental needs of residents and businesses, on a day-to-day basis. Industry services are usually located along rail and highway corridors and are buffered from residential areas. Service centers and city services can be located closer to the neighborhoods and business areas they support and provide services.

Density: The ratio of residential units on an acre of land. Thus, a permitted density of eight (8) dwelling units per acre for a property that has an area of two (2) acres would allow up to 16 dwelling units.

Denver Regional Council of Government (DRCOG): A nonprofit organization of 52 cities and nine counties around the Denver region. DRCOG functions as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Denver region, among other planning responsibilities.

Design Guidelines: Written statements, explanatory material, graphic renderings and/or photographs intended to inform property owners and the public of specific examples of techniques and materials appropriate to achieve identified design goals and objectives.

Design Standards: Written requirements adopted by the city that set forth criteria, the design of particular areas, buildings or elements related to the physical development of the city.

Development: Any man-made change in improved and unimproved real estate outside of public rights-of-way, including but not limited to buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation, drilling operations or storage of equipment or materials.

Development Impact Fees: Expenditures that developers are required to make in connection with approval of their project. Impact fees generally are used to finance public infrastructure and services such as roads, schools, affordable housing, transit systems and other projects and services in municipalities throughout the United States.

Dockless/Docked Mobility : Also known as micromobility. Dockless/docked mobility refers to small, human- or electric-powered vehicles, including bikes, e-bikes, and e-scooters commonly deployed by independent operators as a shared-use fleet. These vehicle can be both “docked” at a station where the vehicle can be rented and returned, or “dockless” where riders can rent a vehicle where it is currently parked and then park the vehicle at their destination. Riders can use a smartphone app or other technology to locate and rent a nearby bike or scooter.

DRCOG 2040 Metro Vision Plan: The Metro Vision Plan is the Denver region’s plan for future growth and development that integrates growth, development, transportation, and water quality management.

Dwelling Unit: A single residential unit providing complete independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.

Dwelling Units per Acre (DU/AC): A unit of measurement commonly used to determine the density of a residential development.

Employment Uses: Land uses intended to support the six industry clusters that make up Westminster’s Industry Base as described in Chapter 6, Economic Resilience. As a place of employment such uses are dominated by professional offices, research and development facilities, laboratories and on a more limited basis manufacturing, fabrication and production facilities. Warehousing and distribution are space intensive and therefore should be very limited within areas designated for employment land uses.

Enclaves: Unincorporated areas entirely surrounded by property within the municipal boundaries of the city, as further defined in the Colorado Revised Statutes.

Experiential Retail: a type of retail marketing whereby customers coming into a physical retail space are offered experiences beyond the traditional ones (such as in a clothing store: browsing merchandise, advice from live human salespeople, dressing rooms and cashiers). Amenities provided may include art (often interactive art), live music, virtual reality, cafés and lounges, and large video display walls.

FasTracks: A voter-approved plan by the Regional Transportation District (RTD) for expanded rail and bus transit throughout the Denver region.

Fiber Conduit: rigid tubing placed underground to house and protect individual fiber telecommunication strands that make up the network.

First and Last Mile Options/Connections: How a transit user travels to/from transit stops and stations. Travel to/from a transit stop or station is just as important as the transit trip. If transit riders are unable to access a stop or station due to poor infrastructure quality or a missing connection, transit becomes ineffective.

Fixed Route Transit: Transit services where vehicles run on regular, scheduled routes with fixed stops and no deviation. Typically, fixed route service is characterized by printed schedules or timetables, designated bus stops where passengers board and alight and the use of larger transit vehicles.

Flex Space: Short for flexible space, is space that is typically leased in a commercial or industrial building that offers a multi-purpose work space, typically with separate manufacturing, warehouse and office areas. Flex space provides the opportunity for a tenant to customize the space to meet their particular business needs.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR): The ratio of floor area permitted on a zoned lot to the size of the lot. Thus, a permitted floor area ratio of 0.5 on a lot that has an area of 10,000 square feet would allow a building whose total floor area equals 5,000 square feet.

Floodplain: The channel and relatively flat area adjoining the channel of a natural stream or river that has been or may be covered by water during times of flood.

Food Desert: An urban area in which it is difficult to buy affordable or good-quality fresh food.

Food Swamp: An urban area with a high-density of establishments selling high-calorie fast food and junk food, relative to healthier food options.

Front Range: Refers to the populated region of Colorado and Wyoming just east of the Rocky Mountains and extending from Cheyenne, Wyoming south to Pueblo, Colorado. This urban corridor benefits from the weather-moderating effect of the Front Range Mountains, which helps mitigate the impacts of storm events.

Gateway: A point along a roadway at which a traveler gains a sense of having entered the city or a particular part of the city. This impression can be imparted through such things as signs, monuments, landscaping, a change in development character, or a natural feature such as a creek.

General Fund: The primary fund used by a government entity. This fund is used to record all resource inflows and outflows that are not associated with special purpose funds. The activities paid for through the general fund constitute the core administrative

and operational tasks of the government entity. Since the bulk of all resources flow through the General Fund, it is most critical to maintain control over the expenditures from it.

Goal: A statement about an end toward which efforts are directed, and that provides the community with direction. A goal is a desired ideal and a value to be sought.

Green Infrastructure: The interconnected system of parks, open space, trails, waterways and other natural areas that connect the city to its natural environment and which provides environmental functions. Low impact development (LID), also commonly referred to as “green stormwater infrastructure” is an approach to surface water runoff management that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle.

Greenfield Development: Development of previously undeveloped sites located outside predominantly developed areas or within recently developing outward expansion areas of the city.

Greenway: A linear open space established along either a natural corridor, such as a creek or stream valley, a ridgeline, a railroad right-of-way converted to recreational use or any natural or landscaped course for pedestrian or bicycle passage. Greenways often serve as open space connectors linking parks, nature reserves, cultural features, or historic sites within populated areas.

Gross Acre: An acre inclusive of areas for streets, open lands or other uses.

Growth Management Area (GMA): An area where urban-level services are planned to be provided within the next twenty years, and which a municipality intends to annex within twenty years. Within these areas, the county agrees to approve only urban-level development according to the city’s adopted plan.

Homeowner and Neighborhood Associations: Home owners associations (HOAs) ordinarily have dues and enforceable covenants, whereas, a neighborhood association may or may not have dues and generally cannot not enforce covenants.

Hydrozone: sub-areas within a landscaped area defined by similar water needs to sustain healthy plants and irrigated using separate zones.

Incubator: A facility used by startup companies that provides affordable workspace, shared equipment, training and mentors, and access to financing, to help these new businesses grow.

Indicator: Indicators are quantitative information about what has often been considered a qualitative subject: the wellbeing of communities. They can be measured and compared over time to find trends that tell communities where they have been and where they are likely headed.

Infill Development: Development of vacant, bypassed parcels of land in otherwise built-up areas.

Infrastructure: Facilities and services need to sustain any type of development. Infrastructure includes but is not limited to streets, drainage, water, wastewater, transportation, power, telecommunications and fire and police facilities.

Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA): A cooperative agreement between two or more governmental jurisdictions.

Land Use: The manner in which land is used.

Land Use Diagram: A plan that geographically depicts future land use types. The land use diagram is a guide in preparing zoning documents for individual properties and to coordinate planning for infrastructure and service delivery.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED): A voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings.

Live Entertainment: A use that includes any or all of the following activities, either principal or accessory: performance by musicians, dancers, stand-up comedians or other performance artists; karaoke; live bands or musical acts; the amplification of recorded music/entertainment by disc jockeys; or the use of a cover charge for admission.

Live/Work: a residential dwelling unit in which a residence is combined with an office, studio or other commercial use. As compared to a home office, a live/work unit is typically open to customers with a public entrance to a street.

Market Analysis: An evaluation of supply and demand in a market area to determine support for new construction.

Market Share: The percentage of a trade area's growth that new development can capture.

Master Plan: (see Comprehensive Plan)

Master Planned Development: a development typically over 10 acres in size coordinated within one development plan through Planned Unit Development or Specific Plan District.

Micromobility: (see Dockless/Docked Mobility)

Microtransit: a form of transit service that offers flexible routing and/or flexible scheduling of minibuses

Missing Middle (Housing): A range of house-scale buildings with multiple units—compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes—located in a walkable neighborhood. These building types, such as duplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, and courtyard buildings, provide diverse housing options and support locally-serving retail and transit options. Referred to as “Missing” because these housing formats have typically been prohibited in many places by zoning ordinances since the mid-twentieth century and “Middle” because they sit in the middle of a spectrum between detached single-family homes and larger apartment buildings, in terms of form and scale, as well as number of units and often, affordability.

Mixed-use: A development type in which various uses, such as office, retail, and residential, are combined to encourage efficiency of development and synergies between uses.

Mobility Hubs: A transit stop or station with access to a variety of transportation modes including pedestrian, bicycle, shared mobility, and connections to other transit services. These areas may also include commercial retail.

Multi-Family: A classification of housing where five or more separate housing units for residential inhabitants are contained within one building. Units can be arranged side-by-side units or stacked on top of each other. A common form is an apartment or condominium building.

Multimodal transportation network: A multimodal transportation network includes all the ways people move around their community: walking, biking, using a wheelchair, riding the bus or train, driving, or carpooling. It also includes new transportation modes like electric scooters and ride-hailing, as well as future technologies. It is important that modes of transportation within the network are well-connected, accessible, and interact safely. The network not only includes infrastructure and vehicles, but is also supported by education, safety, and maintenance programs.

Municipal Code: See Westminster Municipal Code.

Neighborhood Unit: A concept generated through the Westminster Forward process, as a response to the preference for access from residential areas to amenities, services and transportation. Generally, 40 to 250 acres in size and may extend beyond a particular subdivision or development boundary to incorporate uses and activities to fulfill daily needs of residents, typically within a quarter-mile or 5-minute walk. While primarily composed of lower density housing, neighborhood units may feature mixed-use areas along the edges or at key access points where transportation facilities support higher densities or commercial uses. An interconnected street pattern minimizes distances for pedestrians, cyclists, seniors, and children to access amenities and services in the neighborhood. Access to parks, open spaces, and other areas to gather and play are key attributes, typically with a focal point located near the center of the Neighborhood Unit.

Neighborhoods: Geographic sub-areas within the city that contain and derive at least some of their identity from residential land uses, but which also encompass and incorporate a variety of other land uses and facilities. The extent of a neighborhood is variable and may be defined by tradition, period of building and development, subdivision patterns, or formally adopted boundaries.

Node: A center of activity or development, often located at a major intersection or transit station.

Open Space: Public lands acquired or preserved in the public interest to provide for the conservation and protection of natural resources, physical and aesthetic enjoyment of the out-of-doors and protection of prominent geographical, geological, and cultural features and resources. Vacant private property is not considered open space.

Opportunity Zones: A tool enabled as part of the 2017 tax reform package (Tax Cuts and Jobs Act), which is designed to encourage private capital investment in targeted areas of a community.

Paired Home: Two homes that share a wall and have opposite side entries. The structure is designed to look like one single larger home. Unlike a front to front duplex, the paired home helps provide more privacy for the homeowners. Unlike a duplex each unit in a paired home has its own lot with associated responsibilities.

Patio Home: A single-story home attached to a row of other homes. While townhouses and are typically at least two stories high, patio homes are one-story, though a basement may be included.

Pedestrian-oriented: Form of development that makes the street environment inviting for pedestrians; for commercial areas may be characterized by special sidewalk pavement, zero front and side yard setbacks, buildings of varied architectural styles, street-facing window displays, an absence of front yard parking, benches and other amenities; for residential areas may be characterized by sidewalks, parkways, front porches, low fences, lighting and other amenities.

Placemaking: A multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of shared spaces. Placemaking capitalizes on the assets of a particular location and its potential, with the intention of creating shared spaces that promote health, happiness, and well-being.

Planned Unit Development (PUD): A zoning classification to accommodate master planned development that typically include a mix of uses and/or building types or unconventional uses or designs.

Planning Commission: A board created to conduct public hearings and provide recommendations to City Council on the following: review of the city's Comprehensive Plan, proposed development plans, review of proposed annexations, zoning and rezoning requests, and zoning regulations related to development controls. The commission has final approval authority on official development plans and recommends action to City Council regarding annexations, rezonings, Comprehensive Plan amendments, preliminary development plans and zoning regulation amendments.

Policy: A specific statement of principle that articulates a course of action that guides decision making to meet a goal.

Poverty Indicator Business: land uses such as used car lots, rent-to-own businesses, thrift shops, pawn shops, payday lenders and check cashing establishments.

Program: An action, activity, or strategy carried out in response to an adopted policy to achieve a specific goal or objective. Programs establish the “who,” “how” and “where” of goals and objectives.

Public Realm: The public and private, primarily outdoor areas of the city, with high levels of open public access, including street rights-of-way extending from building face to building face, plazas, publicly accessible parking lots, and public parks.

Quality of Life: The personal perception of the physical, economic, and emotional well-being that exists in the community.

Redevelop: To improve and re-use existing buildings; to demolish existing buildings (often in poor condition) and create new ones; or to increase the overall floor area existing on a property, irrespective of whether a change occurs in land use.

Registered Homeowner Association: A homeowner’s association or neighborhood association that has registered with the City of Westminster Community Development Department to receive notification of city programs, services and development projects.

Resiliency: The capacity for the city, and its residents and businesses to prepare for disruptions, to recover from shocks and stresses, and to adapt and grow from a disruptive experience.

Revitalization: Restoring new life or vigor to an economically depressed area, sometimes through public improvements that spark private investment.

Riparian: Refers to living or located on the bank of a natural watercourse such as a creek or lake.

Senior Housing: See Westminster Municipal Code definition for Senior Housing Development.

Setback: An area on a lot establishing a yard between the property lines and the structures and uses on the lot.

Shared-Use Mobility/Services: Services such as car share, bike share, and on-demand transportation services (e.g., Uber, Lyft—also known as Transportation Network Companies (TNC) or on-demand service providers).

Single Family: A development consisting of a lot or lots containing only one dwelling unit and which may take the form of detached or attached, small lot, or manufactured home. In some cases, a single-family use may include an accessory dwelling unit.

Special Districts: Districts authorized by the city and created under Colorado Revised Statutes or City Code for the purposes of financing and/or maintaining public improvements for particular areas of the city. Special districts include but are not necessarily limited to metropolitan districts, business improvement districts (BIDs), and general improvement districts (GIDs), special improvement districts (SIDs), and city special assessment districts.

Specific Plan District (SPD): A zoning district, with a corresponding Specific Plan, for establishing a more fluid and accessible form of classifying and regulating land uses and development within Focus Areas.

Stormwater: Surface runoff and drainage, induced by precipitation events, and conveyed, treated and managed in pipes, channels, creeks, ponds and other public and private facilities.

Strategies: Plans of action intended to support a specific policy.

Streetscape: Pedestrian and landscape improvements in the right-of-way, generally occurring between the curb and the right-of-way line. Streetscape generally includes sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, fencing, furnishings, and landscaped areas, including medians and irrigation.

Sustainability and Sustainable Development: Strategic initiatives and policies that provide both short and long-term solutions to benefit the people, environment, and economic welfare of our community.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF): A funding mechanism authorized at the state level and administered by local governments. The local government designates an area it wants to target for redevelopment as a tax increment district. State law defines the criteria for creating a TIF district.

Telecommuting: In a telecommuting arrangement, the employee works from a home office for either a portion of or all of the work week. They maintain a presence in the office electronically via phone, fax, pager and e-mail and is usually, at a minimum, required to participate in some quarterly, monthly or weekly meetings at the work location.

Townhome: A building that has two or more dwelling units erected in a row as a single building (either as a single building on its own lot, or with each dwelling separated by a lot line), and with each unit separated from the adjoining unit(s) by a fire wall along the dividing lot line. All dwelling units in a townhome are attached.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): Form of development that maximizes investment in transit infrastructure by concentrating the most intense types of development around transit stations and along transit lines; development in such areas is designed to make transit use as convenient as possible.

Transit-Supportive Development: Development that allows for and results in densities, land uses, designs and building orientations that can be expected to support higher levels of transit use as a result of the physical development patterns that are established. Unlike Transit Oriented Development (TOD) which responds existing or programmed higher level transit service, transit supportive development set the stage for higher levels in the future.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM): Strategies, policies, and programs that help people use the transportation system more efficiently, while reducing traffic congestion, vehicle emissions, fuel consumption and increasing safety.

Tree Lawns: The strip of landscaped area between the sidewalk and the curb.

Unified Development Code (UDC): A Title of Westminster Municipal Code establishing standards and procedures for new development.

Universal Design: Universal Design is the implementation and design of built environments meant to be usable by all people and of all abilities, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation.

Urban Centers: An Urban Center is defined by DRCOG as a multimodal, dense, and mixed-use development node that could be developed or intensified to provide a balance of jobs and housing units. DRCOG's Metro Vision 2040 Plan uses Urban Centers as the basis for decision making about regional growth, in particular the formation of a regional transportation system.

Urban Renewal Areas (URA): Urban renewal is a state-authorized, redevelopment and finance program designed to help communities improve and redevelop areas that are physically deteriorated, suffering economic stagnation, unsafe or poorly planned.

Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT): The total number of miles traveled by vehicles over a certain period.

Vision: A shared dream of the future characterized by long-term idealistic thinking. Provides the foundation for the development of the goals, policies and programs. A vision is not binding and may not be achievable in the lifetime of this Comprehensive Plan.

Viewshed: The geographical area that is visible from a location. It includes all surrounding points that are in line-of-sight with that location and excludes points that are beyond the horizon or obstructed by terrain and other features (e.g., buildings, trees). Conversely, it can also refer to area from which an object can be seen.

Walkable Neighborhood: An area designed and constructed to provide and encourage a comfortable, easy and efficient pedestrian movement. Features of a walkable neighborhood may include: sidewalks separated from the street by a planted buffer; continuous sidewalks; safe and well-marked street crossings; short blocks and/or mid-block pedestrian connections; street trees and pleasant streetscapes; windows oriented to the street; lighting; and connections between destinations (parks; shops; gathering places; schools; places of worship) within walking distance.

Walkshed: the area around a destination that is reachable on foot for the average person. An analysis of walksheds can help understand the difficulties of walking to and from central points such as transit stations or food retailers.

Westminster Municipal Code (W.M.C.): A compendium of codes and ordinances that governs the City of Westminster adopted through the city's home rule authority.

Workforce Housing: Refers to housing affordable to households earning between 60 and 120 percent of area median income (AMI). Workforce housing targets middle-income workers which includes professions such as police officers, firefighters, teachers, health care and retail clerks. Households who need workforce housing may not always qualify for housing subsidized by the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program or the Housing Choice Vouchers program (formerly known as Section 8), which are two major programs in place for addressing affordable housing needs.

Zoning: regulations pertaining to building size, bulk, density and the way land is used.

Zoning Map: Map that depicts the division of the city into districts or "zones" in which different uses are allowed and different building and lot size restrictions apply. The zoning map is regulatory in nature and applies to currently permitted uses; it should not be confused with the Land Use Diagram, which guides formation of future zoning.

Zoning Ordinance: A set of land use regulations adopted by the City Council to create districts that permit certain land uses and prohibit others. Land uses in each district are regulated according to type, density, height, and the coverage of buildings.



B

PUBLIC OUTREACH SUMMARY

B.1 A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PLAN

PLANNING PROCESS BY THE NUMBERS

- 9** Large Public Events
- 12** Community Meetings
- 5** Online Activities
- 32** Interviews
- 20,000+** Unique Website Views
- 11** City Edition/Westy Connection articles
- 21** “The Weekly” articles
- 13** Westy Forward Newsletters

To develop a meaningful and community-based plan, citizens need to be engaged throughout the planning process through a variety of opportunities. Input from City officials as well as residents, businesses, City and regional agencies, and the overall Westminster community was a key element of the planning process. As part of the *Westminster Forward* coordinated community engagement process, the Comprehensive Plan team joined five other concurrent City planning efforts to integrate efforts and public participation across disciplines. *Westminster Forward* sought input with broad community outreach from Summer 2018 through Winter 2020 to assist with the development of policies and actions. This includes online questionnaires, plan-specific events, targeted outreach and large community events.

Community engagement kicked off in summer 2018, with the Imagine Westminster event, stakeholder and agency interviews, and the first online survey. This initial phase focused on understanding key issues, opportunities, and challenges that would influence policy direction in the Comprehensive Plan. The most common themes that were initially brought up centered on sustainably managing resources, balancing urban and suburban environments, and being an inclusive community. Comments relative to neighborhood planning, land use, design and sustainable development were also noted to inform *Code Forward*, the parallel project to unify development related standards into a Unified Development Code for Westminster.

Responses show that the Westminster community values the parks, recreation, open space, trail network and mountain views in Westminster, while indicating that improvements could be made in regard to transit service, walkability, and support for local businesses. Input from the public and city staff key themes



which were then translated into the Plan's Guiding Principles of **Thriving Community, Healthy Places, Great Neighborhoods** and **Managed Growth**.

Online questionnaires, public event activities, and City Staff workshops helped identify areas in the city that had the most opportunity for new development, infill or redevelopment. These areas were analyzed based on quantitative and qualitative data, and were referenced consistently throughout the planning process to understand future desired character and how City policies and strategies might influence these areas. This analysis and process updated the Focus Areas and highlighted additional Transition Areas that merit special considerations for future planning, whether the vision of these areas is for new parks, trails, residences or commercial uses.

Going into 2019, the process continued to actively engage Westminster's residents, business owners, and local and regional partners to assist with the development of City policies. With the preliminary visioning priorities and opportunities identified, the outreach activities dug deeper into each issue such as housing, retail, transportation and neighborhoods.

Questionnaire results, written-in comments, and in-person discussions were synthesized and insights translated into the Plan's goals, policies, and potential implementation actions. Throughout community engagement in 2018 and 2019 online questionnaires resulted in greater response than plan-specific meetings, and participation increased with each survey offering, starting with 149 responses, growing to 170, then 200, then 358 and significantly to 598 responses with the online questionnaire #5.



Table B-1. Public Engagment Communication

Communication Avenue	Location	Audience
Project Website	www.cityofwestminster.us/forward	20,000+ hits; 15,000+ unique views
Informational Displays	College Hill and Irving Street Libraries; City Park and Westview Rec Centers; the MAC	2,400/day
City Edition/Westy Connection – 11 bi-monthly editions from August 2018 to December 2020	Every residence and business within the City	56,750+
The Weekly – 21 editions from July 2018 to December 2020	Email newsletter – citywide	3,300+
Westminster Forward Newsletter – 13 editions	Email newsletter – Westminster Forward	800+
Social Media	Facebook, Next Door	6,600+

COMMUNICATIONS

City staff employed various communication avenues to elicit outreach during community engagement, including online and digital media, print media, and displays at various locations.

Summarized information on community engagement is organized within this document in the following sections:

1. 2018 Community Engagement
2. Stakeholder Interviews
3. 2019 Community Engagement
4. 2020 Activities
5. Planned 2021 Activities

Through each stage of engagement ideas were synthesized to inform key topics and themes for the plan to address and items requiring further discussion were identified for future engagement topics.

2040 Comprehensive Plan guides Westminster's next decade

WESTMINSTER FORWARD

The Comprehensive Plan is just one of several plans that will lead the city into the future. Westminster Forward was developed as a coordinated community engagement program to identify policies and actions to form an updated Comprehensive Plan. The first Sustainability Plan, a Transportation & Mobility Plan, a Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan, a Water Supply Plan, and a Code Forward to provide development standards to support the policies of these plans.

Westminster Forward is not one final plan or product. The outcome will be a suite of individual plans to establish guidance for policy and programming based on resource availability.

Comprehensive Plan Purpose

The Comprehensive Plan will lay the foundation for livability, accessibility, community identity and growth for the next two decades. As the city means business, the Plan creates a framework and standards to ensure future development is adequately served by municipal services and infrastructure. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan will take into account changed conditions since 2013 including greater demographic diversity, an aging population, housing needs, land use improvement, changing land inventory and changing market conditions, an interest in public health, and a reconsideration of land use assumptions to align with the city's water supply.



How does the 2040 Comprehensive Plan reflect these changes?

- The 2013 Plan's nine themes were re-evaluated and pared down to emphasize the future nature of the city with development opportunities, the responsible management of water and other limited resources, and the desire to be one of the most sustainable, safe and healthiest cities in America.
- In tandem with water supply planning, the updated Plan re-evaluated the land use categories and their distribution. This evaluation was necessary to ensure a balance of opportunities to provide for employment opportunities, housing and accessible locations for growth and services.
- Several topics were identified through the public engagement process that are not addressed in the existing Plan. Some of these include:
 - Predictable and transparent development process
 - Healthy living, including food access
 - Reinvestment in existing neighborhoods
 - Housing to address changing demographics, such as seniors and intergenerational households
 - Resiliency of the water supply system
 - Water conservation

We encourage the public to review the Draft Comprehensive Plan. Here's how you can be involved now:

- Stay tuned for ways to review the draft at www.cityofwestminster.us/forward
- Sign up online to be notified by email of Westminster Forward updates and events at www.cityofwestminster.us/forward
- Email us at westminsterforward@cityofwestminster.us

www.cityofwestminster.us/forward

Reply All Forward

Thu 11/19/2020 4:21 PM

Thornton, Jonathan

The Weekly

To Everyone (All Outlook Users)

COVID-19 and City News



[Take a moment to appreciate sewer systems on World Toilet Day](#)

[Free rapid COVID-19 tests available for city business employees](#)

[Get a 'meeting in a box' to review the 2040 Comprehensive Plan](#)

[Tips to avoid sewer backups this holiday cooking season](#)

[Inaugural issue of Police Department's newsletter](#)

[Next water/sewer rate Study Session is Dec. 15](#)

[Draft Sustainability Plan available for public comment](#)

[Sign up now to help shovel out a neighbor later when the snow falls](#)



WESTMINSTER

CITY EDITION

JUNE/JULY 2019



< ARE YOU PREPARED?

Don't be a victim
PAGE 2

PROTECT YOUR > WATERWAYS

Here's how you can help
PAGE 3



Moving Forward with Westminster Forward

The city continues efforts to form a framework for the future of Westminster. This effort is called "Westminster Forward" and incorporates a family of coordinated citywide plans: the Comprehensive Plan (land use); Parks, Recreation and Libraries Plan; Sustainability Plan; Trans-

portation and Mobility Plan; Unified Development Code; and Water Supply Plan.

To date, planning outreach efforts have reached nearly 10,000 people through the city website, City Edition articles, one-on-one interviews, public events and meetings, and online surveys.

Throughout late winter and spring, the city and consultant team have worked to identify opportunity areas - those areas of vacant land and/or appropriate areas for redevelopment - and determine land use concepts within those areas.

A next step in this process is to correlate land uses with water demand, which will allow the city to proactively plan future development to meet anticipated water supply. The first products of this effort are Please see **FORWARD** on page **3**

B.2 2018 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement in 2018 was deliberately limited and strategic in consideration of other major community engagement activities underway at the time, with 2019 planned for the bulk of engagement efforts.

Table B-2. 2018 Events

Date	Event	Location	Attendees/
3 Jun	Imagine Westminster	Historic Westy	150
Ongoing	Stakeholder Interviews	Westminster	32
June -August	Online Questionnaire #1	Online	149
14 Aug	Visioning Workshops	City Hall	52
18 Aug	Mayor's Youth Advisory Panel	City Hall	21
August	Online Questionnaire #2	Online	170
18 Sept	Design Workshop	City Park Rec. Center	9
20 Oct	Harvest Festival	Downtown	34,000, with 2,086 dot votes
October - November	Online Questionnaire #3	Online	200
8 Nov	Taste of Westminster	Ice Center	400

Engagement in 2018 started at Imagine Westminster with a few basic questions about the community to identify strengths, assets and challenges. The questions including asking participants what they love about Westminster, what could be improved and what does the City's Vision statement mean to them.

What do we LOVE about Westminster?

Top 10:

- Parks/Recreation
- Open Space
- Bike/Trail Network
- Mountain Views
- Convenience of the B-Line
- Proximity to Denver & Boulder
- Local Shops
- Sense of Community
- Standley Lake
- Clean Water



Summary of Comments

The most common themes of the responses centered on having one or more defined urban centers in Westminster, sustainably managing resources, balancing the urban and suburban environments, and being an inclusive community. Other comments relating to the Vision emphasized financial sustainability, affordable housing, walkability, and a high quality of life.

Based on input from the public and additional vetting with City staff an outline of key components of the City's vision have been identified:

Next Urban Center of the Colorado Front Range

- Needs an identity and identifiable center
- Define “center”; whole city? Or 5 focus areas?
- Define what “Urban Center” means to the rest of the city (seems downtown focused)
- Urban Center: One or many? – Traditional Downtown
- Concentrated Urban Center

Vibrant

- Quality of life and continued improvement
- Increasing choice for residents/lifestyle options
- I like it. It's aspirational and progressive. I would want to live here.

Inclusive

- Key: inclusive for all, not just for the “haves” like Boulder
- Internal inclusivity, creativity, and connectivity within city staff departments
- Community engagement at an authentic level to achieve equity and inclusivity

Well-Connected

- Need more transportation (multi-modal) options and safe ways to get to the B-Line by foot or bike
- Walkable and bike-able throughout
- Need more transportation options for people that actually use, such as roads.
- Retrofitting suburbia to ease mobility
- How and when will we realize true connectivity?

Distinct Neighborhoods

- Needs an identity and identifiable center
- Complete downtown
- “Neighborhood downtown” areas
- Need a balance between dense, “urban” centers and the traditional suburban lifestyle that brought so many existing residents to Westminster.
- Westminster should strive to be unique and distinct. Who is the City's competition?

Quality Educational Opportunities

- Education disparities among three districts
- Resilient Local Economy
- Local jobs and employee housing
- Long-term financial sustainability – Urban density supports economic resiliency
- Expand opportunities to enhance workforce

Embraces the Outdoors

- Green space access for all
- The environment is changing and we have to plan accordingly
- The City should try to achieve the perfect blend of urban and natural
- Westminster should strive to be the “wildest urban center in Colorado”, in which ‘wild’ refers to ample access to nature

One of the Most Sustainable Cities in America

- Density in nodes near transit
- Lower density farther afield
- What does this mean? Everyone has a different idea (of sustainability)
- Financial sustainability
- Resource sustainability
- Long-term financial sustainability. Urban density supports economic resiliency
- The vision doesn't address housing affordability or environmental health concerns (droughts, fragile water system).
- Sustainability and resiliency are essential to this plan update. Is “urbanism” sustainable?
- Need a balance of environment, economics, and equity
- Balance, balance, balance!
- Integration: Growth has a domino effect
- Water supply; wise use of limited resources

Diverse & Integrated Housing

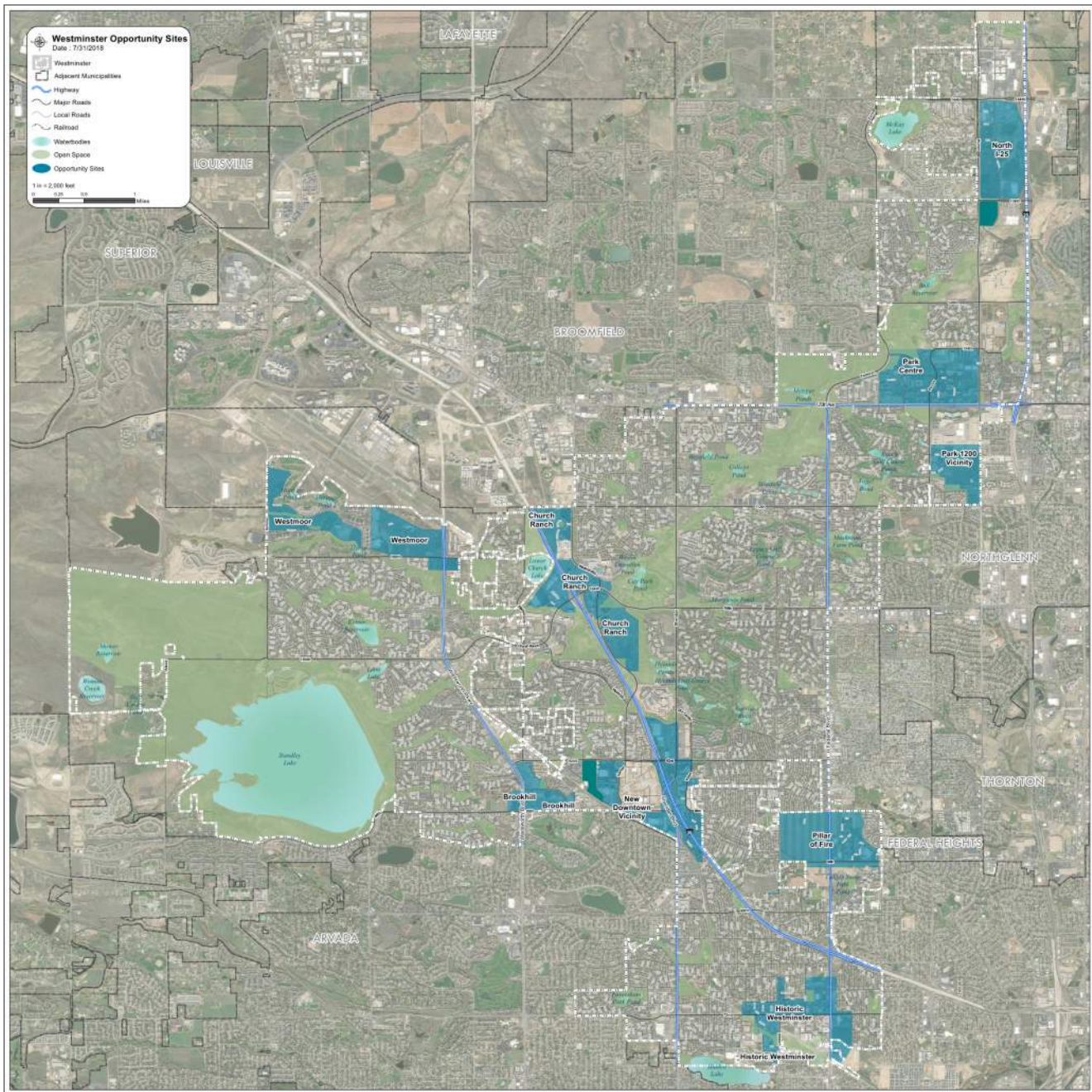
- Diverse housing should be affordable
- Flexibility with housing options; townhomes, condos, AirBnB
- Local jobs and employee housing
- Build out; When? How many people?
- Housing strategies; diversity
- Urban is the opposite of what people want

There were several comments on how the Vision was abstract or confusing. Additionally, several participants questioned the attainability of the Vision statement and inquired as to how success will be measured.

A second workshop series in 2018 was about visioning for the City as it relates to development of key areas with vacant land or anticipated redevelopment. Participants of this exercise were asked to identify “Opportunity Areas” and in addition, identify land uses appropriate to those areas, and then for that land use, what character makes sense. These locations as shown on the map below represent 3.93 square miles, which is just under 12% of the City’s overall land area.

As a result of potential confusion between “Opportunity Areas” and the federally designated “Opportunity Zones” program, these locations were subsequently renamed to “Transition Areas.”





As shown on the map it is recognized that most of the City – approximately 90% of the City’s land area – and in particular established residential areas and parks or open spaces, will not change significantly in the future. Participants were presented with a series of images of different land uses and building typologies to populate these Opportunity Areas. While each individual area elicited different responses, some generalized preferences emerged through this exercise that are instructive to both the Comprehensive Plan and *Code Forward*.

Below is the specific imagery most selected by participants:



Housing above Retail



2-3 Story Townhome Apartments



Lofts



3-4 Story Townhome Apartments



Main Street Retail/
Commercial



Amenity and
Entertainment



Outdoor Gathering/
Eating Areas



Urban-Format
Employment



Vertical Mixed Use



Integrated Public Art



Plaza with Seating



Transit Stations

Below is the specific imagery least selected by participants:



Large-Lot, Single-Family



Big Box Development



Small-Scale Industrial Warehouse



Campus-Style Employment



Large-Scale Industrial Flex



Loft Industrial Flex



Solar Farm



Urban Agriculture






The majority of the City is expected to remain stable with only incremental development at scales generally compatible with surrounding development. Therefore the Opportunity Area exercise results are not meant to direct development patterns across the balance of the City nor to increase densities in areas not previously designated as Focus Areas, but rather the purpose was to establish a vision for each area to inform both the Comprehensive Plan and standards for *Code Forward*. Development consisting of medium level intensities and active park and civic spaces were primarily selected as preferences for the Opportunity Areas while images provided in the survey of large lot single family, big box stores, campus-style employment and large-scale industrial were among the least popular selections for these identified locations.

A third exercise was a visual preference survey looking at specific design elements such as building mass and scale, materials, street frontages and landscaping that more directly informs *Code Forward*. Findings in some areas supported compact development forms provided that the appropriate design elements are provided relative to a mass and scale, materials, street frontages and landscape features. A Design Workshop was scheduled as part of this activity but yielded minimal turnout therefore staff continued to identify larger community events to engage residents.



The online questionnaire associated with this activity was broadcast to participants at the Harvest Festival and Taste of Westminster in the fall of 2018. *Westminster Forward* cookies were also available at Taste of Westminster to try to raise awareness of this effort.

Internal City Staff discussions established some priorities for further development through this work including continued attention to financial sustainability with a cost-feasible plan, a goal of sustainability and resiliency with water and sewer as a subset of that and a goal to be “bold, innovative and different” that addresses changing demographics, regional leadership in housing, multimodal connectivity, City identity, inclusivity, neighborhood pride and refinement of the development process.

Commercial Building Design Variables									
Review each image below, considering the topic highlighted for each section of images. Then, using the stickers provided, identify whether the image would be appropriate or inappropriate for Westminster. Please use only one sticker per image.									
Mass & Scale									
									
HF	Appropriate 9	Inappropriate 3	Appropriate 34	Inappropriate 1	Appropriate 6	Inappropriate 13	Appropriate 2	Inappropriate 9	
SG	92		111		38		55		
Building Height									
									
HF	Appropriate 20	Inappropriate 4	Appropriate 19	Inappropriate 2	Appropriate 8	Inappropriate 1	Appropriate 9	Inappropriate 34	
SG	87		107		82		39		



Westminster Forward themed cookies

STAFF PRIORITIZED KEY ISSUES



B.3 STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

32 stakeholder interviews were conducted including the Mayor and City Council, residents, City staff from throughout the organization, property owners and representatives of community organizations. Consultant services were used for the interviews to allow for candid feedback and results have only been presented in aggregate form so as to allow interviewees comments to be grouped with discussion topics and not individualized. Separately 26 additional interviews were also held with community stakeholders for *Code Forward*.

The questions prompted interviewees to look 20 years into the future, but also solicited comments on current challenges and opportunities, identification of preferences relative to development patterns and design, business development, and suggestions on community input. Key takeaways from these interviews have been organized around the fifteen key issue areas to align with the staff-identified objectives:

Address Changing Demographics

- Consider the preferences and lifestyles of the future population of Westminster (i.e. Boomer and Millennial preferences and Generation Z emerging preferences)
- Ensure equal access to good schools
- Ensure a trained workforce and options for livability within the city (e.g. attainable housing)

Address Increasing Diversity and Ensure Inclusivity

- Improve accessibility through multimodal transportation
- Incorporate Westminster's diverse population into future plans
- Address housing diversity and affordability through ADUs
- Address mental health issues and provide access to opportunities to support citizens in need (e.g. coordinate with other regional entities to provide services; ensure transit service reaches these services; set aside land in key areas that don't currently provide services)

Ensure Resiliency

- Promote economic and environmental resiliency
- Identify options to adjust for declining sales tax revenue

Address Feasibility of Infrastructure and Service Costs

- Reduce (or recognize) financial impact of improvements on low-income residents
- Set expectations for level of services
- Improve the condition of our infrastructure

Address Sewer Capacity

- Address water and sewer service availability along with rates for usage

Ensure Water Availability

- Educate the public on the reasons behind water rate increases and the benefits of conservation
- Develop a realistic comprehensive plan that takes water limitations into account
- Address resource limitations and risks

Be a Regional Leader for Affordable Housing

- Encourage density where appropriate
- Investigate rent control for the Orchard
- Look into the development of a new urbanist community

Create Neighborhood Pride

- Create sub-neighborhoods
- Contemplate the annexation of enclaves
- Encourage diverse residential development
- Support homeowner associations
- Promote a variety of housing options
- Promote and strengthen aging neighborhoods; revitalize; and emphasize code enforcement in key areas; increase connectivity and wayfinding; improve amenities
- Through signage, wayfinding, and walkability visually attract people off arterials and into key areas

Ensure Multimodal Connectivity and Safety

- Improve pedestrian safety at crossings and on sidewalks; implement safe crossings at arterials (e.g. under/ overpasses)
- Identify trail connections north of 92nd
- Increase access to transit options
- Ensure first and last mile connections to transit
- Increase connectivity where possible, especially within redevelopment options, and to commercial centers adjacent to neighborhoods
- Enhance walkability and bikability without lessening traffic capacity

Create a Resilient Local Economy

- Determine the best use for the Orchard
- Consider adding an additional focus area south of 88th
- Develop special area plans for Harris Park, Orchard, and the TOD area
- Identify potential areas of change within the City
- Investigate the feasibility of tax increment finance districts
- Encourage greater use of flex office spaces
- Focus on redevelopment and development equally
- Improve the jobs/housing balance

- Evaluate the cost to the City of 5 units per acre density and lower
- Promote horizontal mixed-use developments
- Review subdivision standards
- Repurpose strip malls
- Ensure appropriate intensity transitions when infilling
- Ensure appropriate signage standards to assist in success of business

Refine the Development Process

- Create a consistent and predictable development process
- Consider alternatives to PUD
- Produce an actionable plan
- Ensure high quality of design

Be Bold, Innovative and Different

- The Comprehensive Plan should be reflective of the City's vision
- Develop an all-encompassing plan
- Educate and engage the community
- Focus on regional collaboration, especially in regard to transportation and key issues such as homelessness
- Truly enact an interdepartmental team to tackle city issues
- Identify benchmarks within the strategic action plan, along with responsibilities
- Initiate a feedback loop with the public to give a sense of transparency that the city has heard issues and comments; this is what has been done; this is what can't be done and why
- Ensure that the document reflects the residents' desires and needs
- Incorporate S-P-I-R-I-T (Service, Pride, Integrity, Responsibility, Innovation, Teamwork)
- Include goals and policies regarding enhanced communication with residents
- Integrate the plan digitally (i.e. within the City's website as an interactive document, and through a video executive summary that highlights the process, outreach, and key plan highlights)

Be One of the Most Sustainable Cities

- Promote sustainable practices within local government
- Become a leader in sustainability
- Incorporate sustainability into new developments
- Incentivize alternative energy sources
- Promote resource conservation
- Study property tax and special tax increases to improve financial sustainability
- Implement an economic and environmental sustainability program for businesses
- Create a City-run health and human services department
- Ensure clear and clean air (expand mobility options with bikes and transit)
- Research and test new, different materials to respond to climate change (e.g. new roadway materials to respond to increasing temperatures)

-
- Investigate shared city/ county services (i.e. can we afford to maintain all-inclusive city services?)
 - Incorporate sustainability, but be mindful of unexpected results and costs

Expand Culture and the Arts

- Expand the local arts program and preserve the culture of the historic areas of Westminster, as well as the Latino and Hmong communities
- Promote the development of a performing arts complex
- Investigate tools such as public art dedication or fee-in lieu
- Create special districts in which murals and art are integrated with signage

Embrace the Outdoors

- Develop recreational opportunities (e.g. parks, recreation center, and library) north of 120th
- Consider property-tax rate increases that are commensurate with similar communities to mitigate lessening sales tax
- Look into developing a regional recreation program
- Prioritize the maintenance of existing land over purchase of new land

The input resulting from stakeholder input helped staff to further refine issues for additional community conversations and noteworthy suggestions to include in development of the Plan.

B.4 2019 OUTREACH

Since project inception, 2019 was planned as the most significant phase of community engagement as it would be sequenced after other City 2018 engagement efforts on topics such as Water2025 and staff would be able to tap into the extensive calendar of community events to reach audiences who may not otherwise attend a City meeting. This also proved fortunate given the limitation on in-person engagement in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Building upon earlier input in 2018, the 2019 efforts provided additional opportunities for public engagement and a deeper dive into plan topic areas through *Westminster Forward* events, larger community events and targeted outreach. Staff sought to inform community members of the *Westminster Forward* planning projects and push participation of the online surveys. Translation services were offered at Latino Festival, the Hmong outreach, and the fall 2019 People, Places and Plans open houses. Online questionnaires were offered in both English and Spanish.

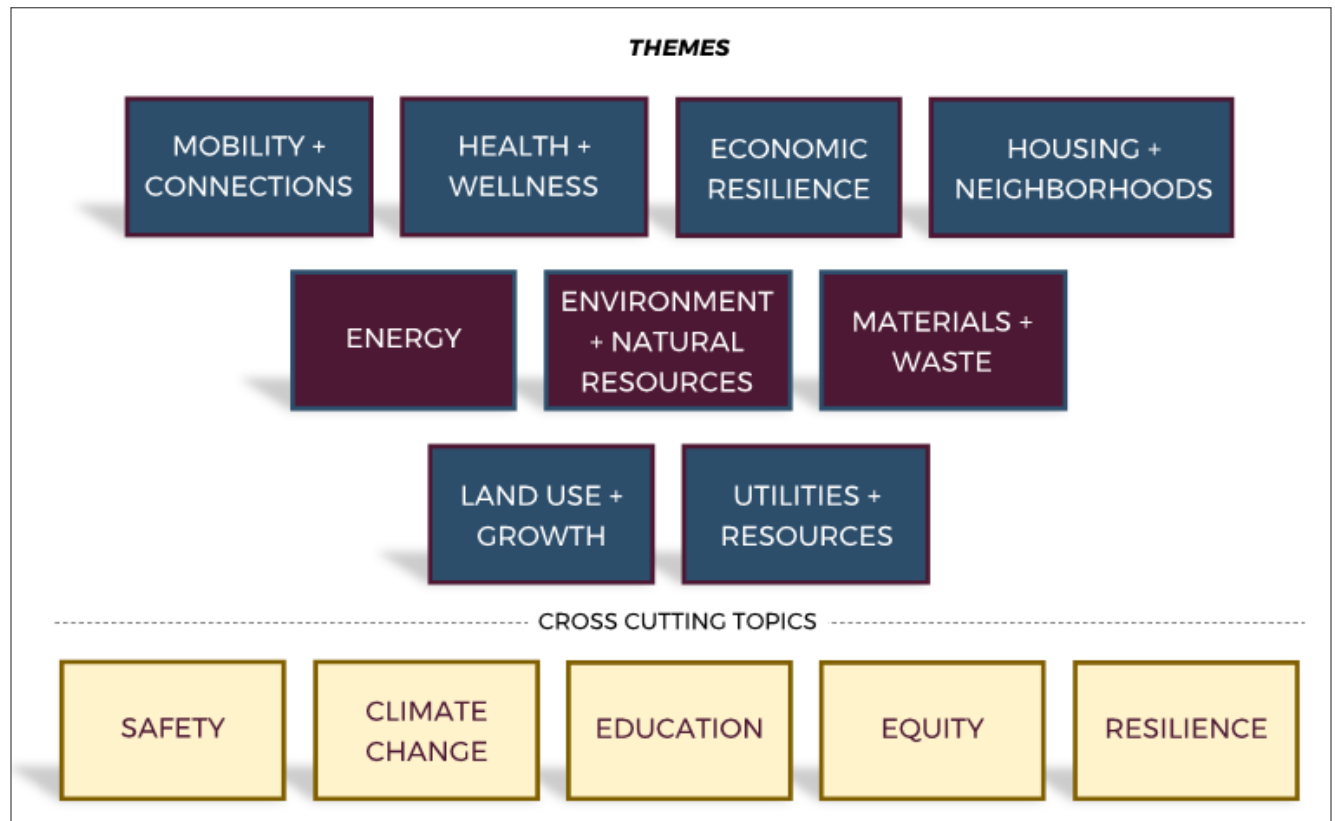
Table B-3. 2019 Events

Date	Event	Location	Attendees/
26 Feb	Homebuilders Association	HBA of Denver	12
7 Jun	Historic Westminster Summer Festival	Historic Westminster	600
14 Jun	Movies in the Park	Legacy Ridge	750
20 Jun	Latino Festival	Westminster Station	3,528, w/ 924 dot votes
Jun - Sep	Online Questionnaire #4	Online	358
17 Aug	Mayor's Youth Advisory Panel	Westview Rec. Center	21
23 Aug	Movies in the Park	City Park	1,000
14 Sep	Hmong Outreach	Westminster Garden	11
26 Sep,	Online Questionnaire #3	Online	200
16 Oct	People, Places, and Plans Events (2)	City Park Rec. Center, The MAC	75+
Oct - Nov	Online Questionnaire #5	Online	598
19 Oct	Harvest Festival	Downtown	34,000
23 Oct	City of Westminster Wellness Event	City Park Rec. Center	340
7 Nov	Taste of Westminster	Ice Center	500
6 & 13 Nov	Meeting in a Box (2 Meetings)	Resident Household	13
14 Jan (2020)	Homebuilders Association	HBA of Denver	14

KEY FINDINGS FROM 2019 OUTREACH

There were great community conversations at the events and meetings in 2019 with the opportunity provided to interface with over 40,000 residents and community stakeholders. The feedback received from the Westminster community provided important insight to perceptions of development, desired character, and Plan priorities.

The questionnaire results, written-in comments, and in person discussions will all be synthesized and insights translated into goals, policies, and strategy actions within Plan. Building on the outreach completed in 2018, general themes and plan priorities emerged. Below illustrates the overall topics covered in each plan, along with a handful of “crosscutting” themes that should be addressed in the *Westminster Forward* plans, including the Sustainability Plan and Comprehensive Plan.



In addition to these overall topics, priority opportunities were identified through early conversations with city staff and further vetted by the public through outreach activities. Based on this feedback, the following will also be integrated into the *Westminster Forward* plans:

- Long-term water availability and sewer capacity constraints
- Sustainability and Resiliency
- Balanced land uses and development review process
- Multimodal connectivity and safety
- Distinct neighborhood pride
- Impacts of changing demographics
- Diversity and Inclusive Cultures
- Affordable housing
- City's uniqueness in location and culture

With these priorities in mind, the community engagement activities started digging deeper into each issue through the 2019 outreach efforts. Key preferences and desires of the Westminster community are noted below:

- Preference for mixed-use development patterns, but not everywhere.
- Diversity of housing types, but supported by nearby activities (i.e. restaurants, neighborhood-oriented retail) to form “neighborhood units” with a common theme.
- Focus on walkability (smaller, neighborhood services closer to housing; shaded sidewalk; interconnected sidewalks system).
- Addressing the needs of changing demographics and being inclusive (i.e. housing for different types of households) .
- Incorporating parks as not just recreational areas, but also as social spaces; tied into “neighborhood units” and mixed-use areas of restaurants, small retail, and housing.
- Need to “infill” dying retail areas with new uses that can adapt to changing shopping preferences.
- Recognizing the need to be more sustainable and the need to plan for a finite water supply. This comes in the form of planning for infrastructure to match development needs and looking at water conservation.
- Mitigate commuter inflow/ outflow through addition of employment along with housing in strategic locations.

SUMMER OUTREACH & QUESTIONNAIRE #4

The purpose of the summer outreach events was to inform community members of *Westminster Forward* and push participation of the concurrent online survey (Questionnaire #4).

Historic Westminster Summer Festival

City staff provided information on *Westminster Forward* plans, online activities and used this event to announce upcoming additional outreach.

Movies in the Park

City staff provided a booth at two of the movie events. Overview materials were presented, a vote-by-dot exercise was provided and postcards distributed to movie attendees which directed them to the online questionnaire (see online questionnaire results on page 5). The display boards asked attendees to identify, by theme, one word that represents or describes the ideal future for the City. Common adjective responses were as follows:

Sustainable, safe, fun, friendly, active, family-friendly, beautiful, artsy, accessible, for all ages, convenient, efficient, affordable/attainable, connected, social, diverse, clean, effective, protected, modern

Additional notes on specific elements of the City important to maintain, enhance, and add: parks, open space, trails, bikes, playgrounds, local shops, train, solar, pool, technology, community activities, restaurants, dog parks, electric vehicle charging, and scooters.

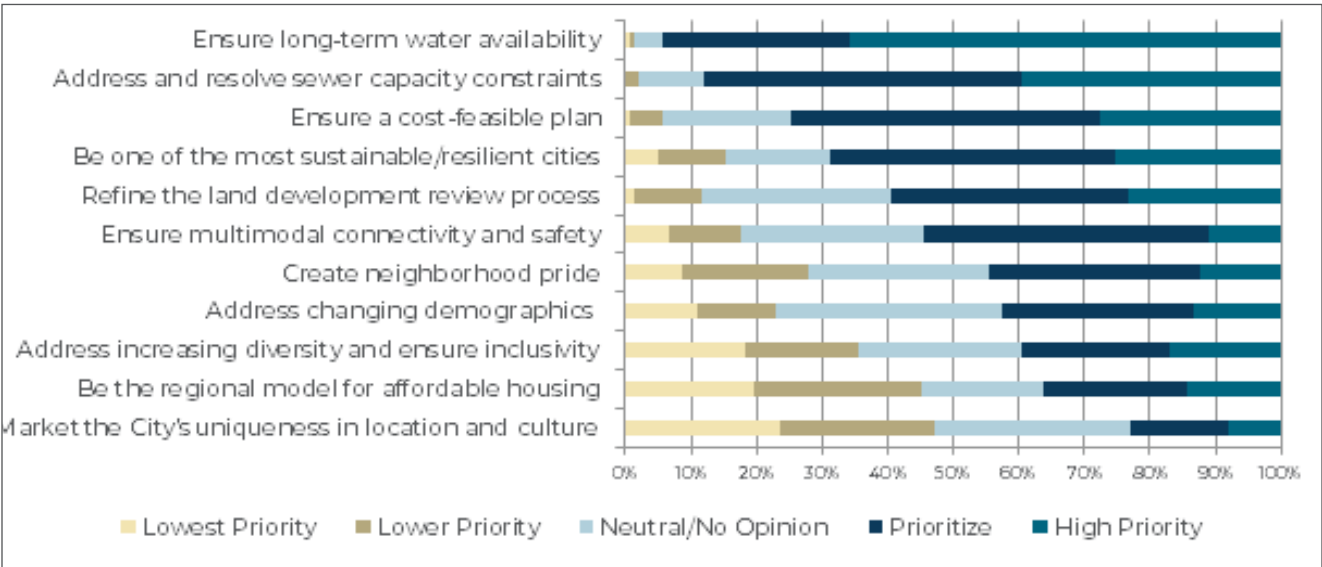


Online Questionnaire #4

The most common themes of Online Questionnaire #4 centered on housing, open space, and sustainability practices. A total of 358 community members participated in this survey. The findings of this survey, described in the following pages, are combined with the results from our summer event participation, where applicable.

Which issues are the MOST important?

The following list of choices offered to respondents was originally created through early conversations with city staff on key issues



and opportunities for the updated Comprehensive Plan.

Respondents noted infrastructure development, fiscal implications and sustainability and the top issues:

1. Ensure long-term water availability
2. Address and resolve sewer capacity constraints
3. Ensure a cost-feasible plan
4. Be one of the most sustainable/ resilient cities.

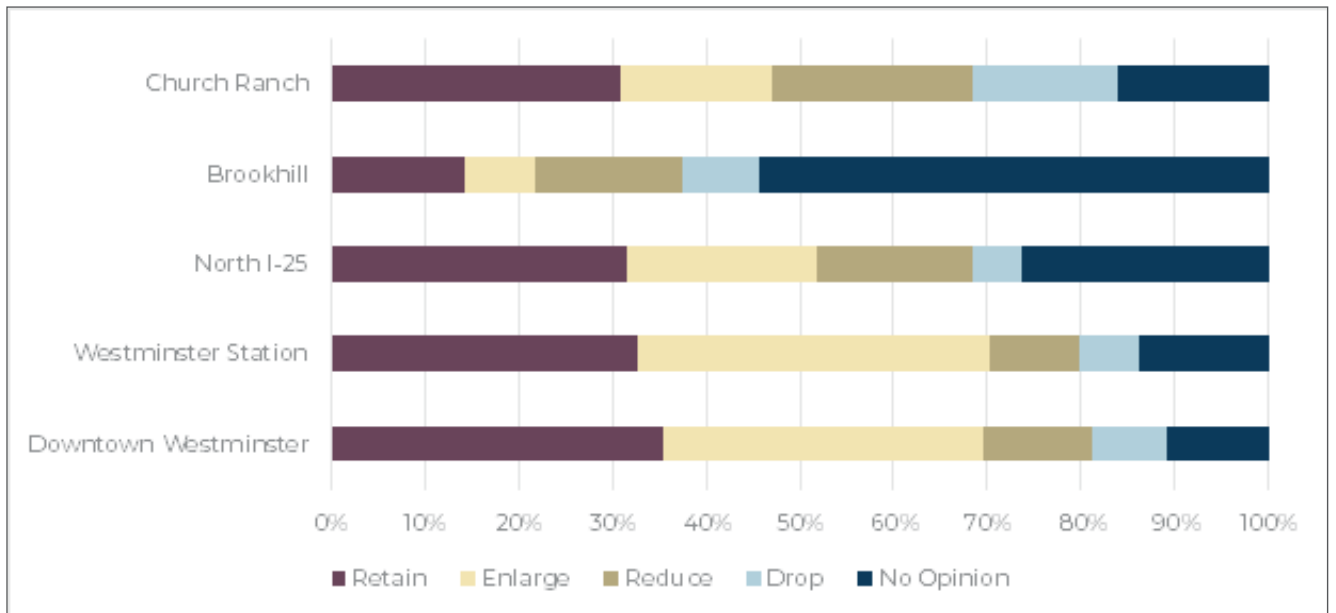
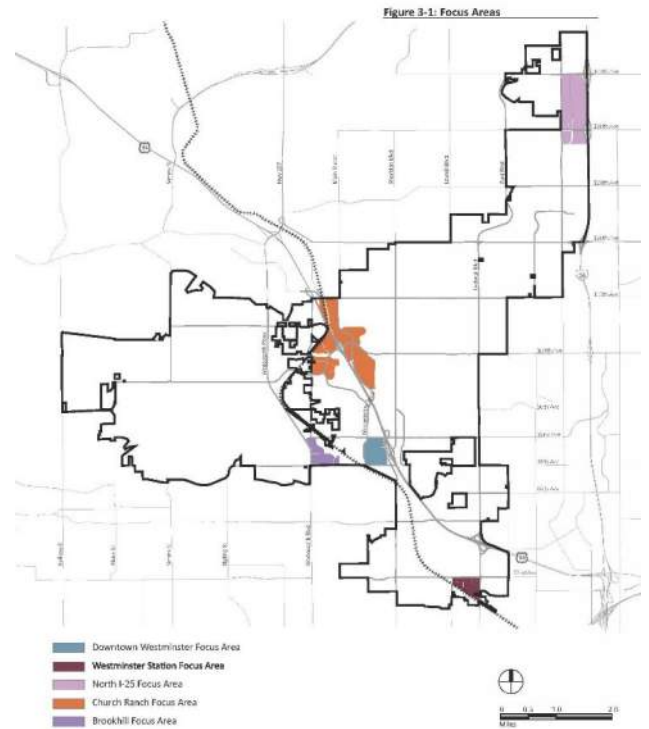
City uniqueness, and addressing diversity and inclusivity were noted as least important

These prioritized items have implications for all of the [Westminster Forward](#) plans but in particular the Sustainability Plan, Comprehensive Plan, and Water Supply Plan.

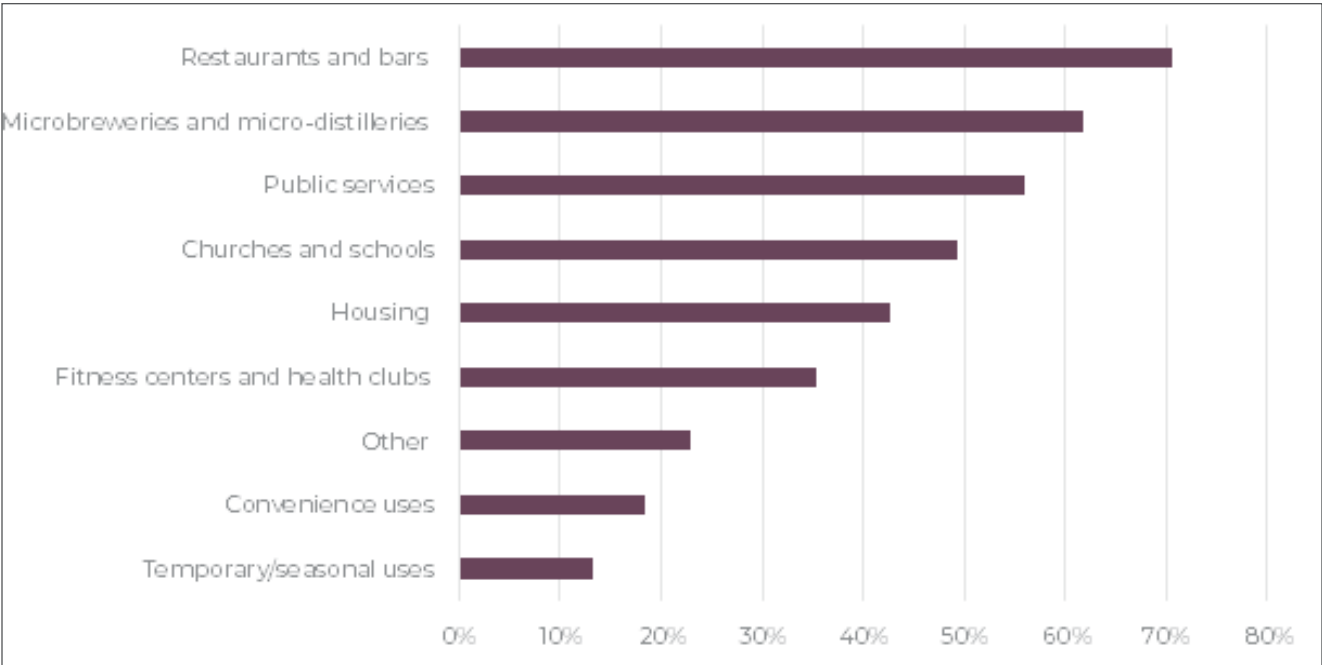
Are these the correct FOCUS AREAS?

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan identifies five “Focus Areas” where the greatest amount of growth and change over the next 20 years will occur. These areas consist of less than 4% of the City’s land area. The following map from the existing Comprehensive Plan shows the locations of Focus Areas.

Through the update of the Comprehensive Plan, there is an opportunity to reassess whether these are the right places to focus future growth. Based on these responses, some of these areas may need to be adjusted to reassess the overall area and impact of some of these Focus Areas. For example, the Westminster Station and Downtown Westminster Focus Areas may need to be enlarged into their surrounding areas, and Brookhill and Church Ranch possibly reduced in area.



As Westminster's retail shopping centers lose tenants and their viability as retail providers, what ALTERNATIVES should be considered?

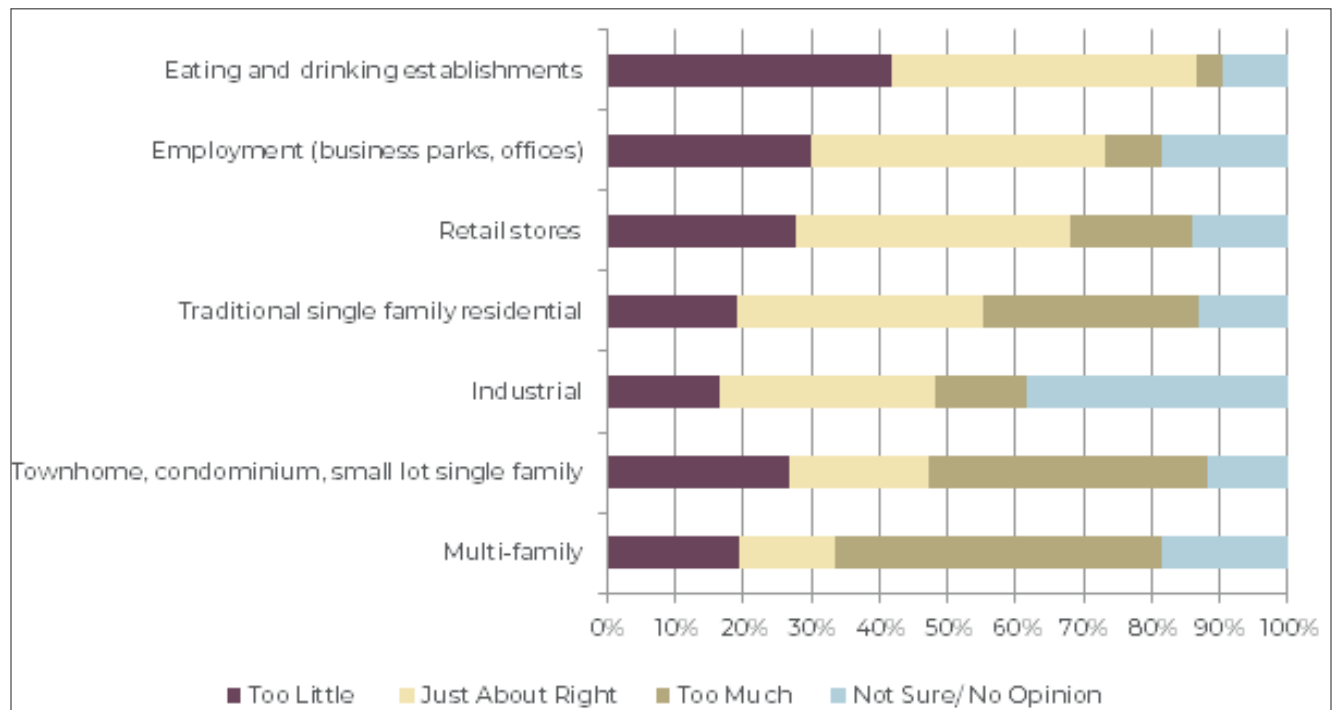


Established retail areas in 2019 were already exhibiting challenging conditions as many retail stores have reduced their footprints while 2020 saw an acceleration of this trend. This question intended to solicit ideas of new uses in their retail areas. Results for this question identified a preference (common throughout this outreach summary) for increased restaurants and drinking establishments, along with public services. There is little interest in accommodating additional temporary/ seasonal uses, or convenience uses (e.g. gas stations or drive-through uses). The written-in “Other” options included ideas like arts/cultural center, business incubators, civic or community space, and parks.

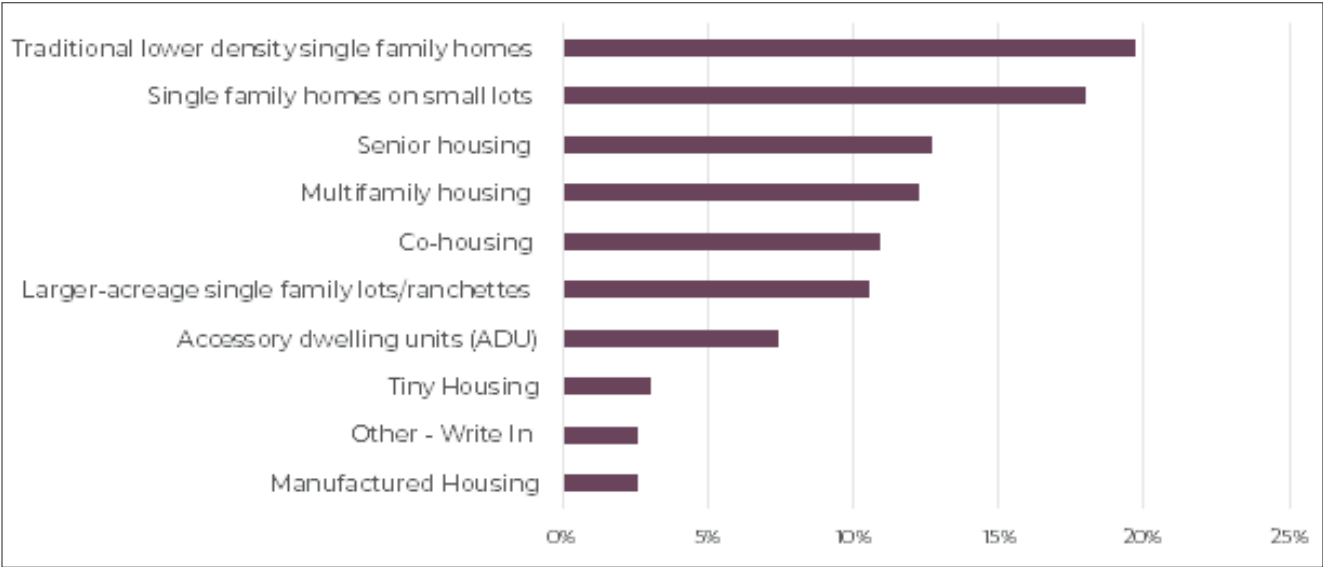
How do you feel about the rate of GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT in Westminster?

This question asked residents whether they believe the rate of growth and development in Westminster has been too little, just about right, or too much since 2010. A short description was provided for each of the land use categories to provide respondents context for their selection.

Again, as seen from these results, there is a preference for additional eating and drinking establishments, but concern over the amount of housing being developed, as there are high percentages of “too much” multi-family, townhome, condominium, small lot single family, and single-family residential. The high percentage of “Not Sure/No Opinion” on the allocation of Industrial land uses may be due to the fact that Westminster has little traditional industrial development and the land patterns do not lend themselves to heavy industrial uses.



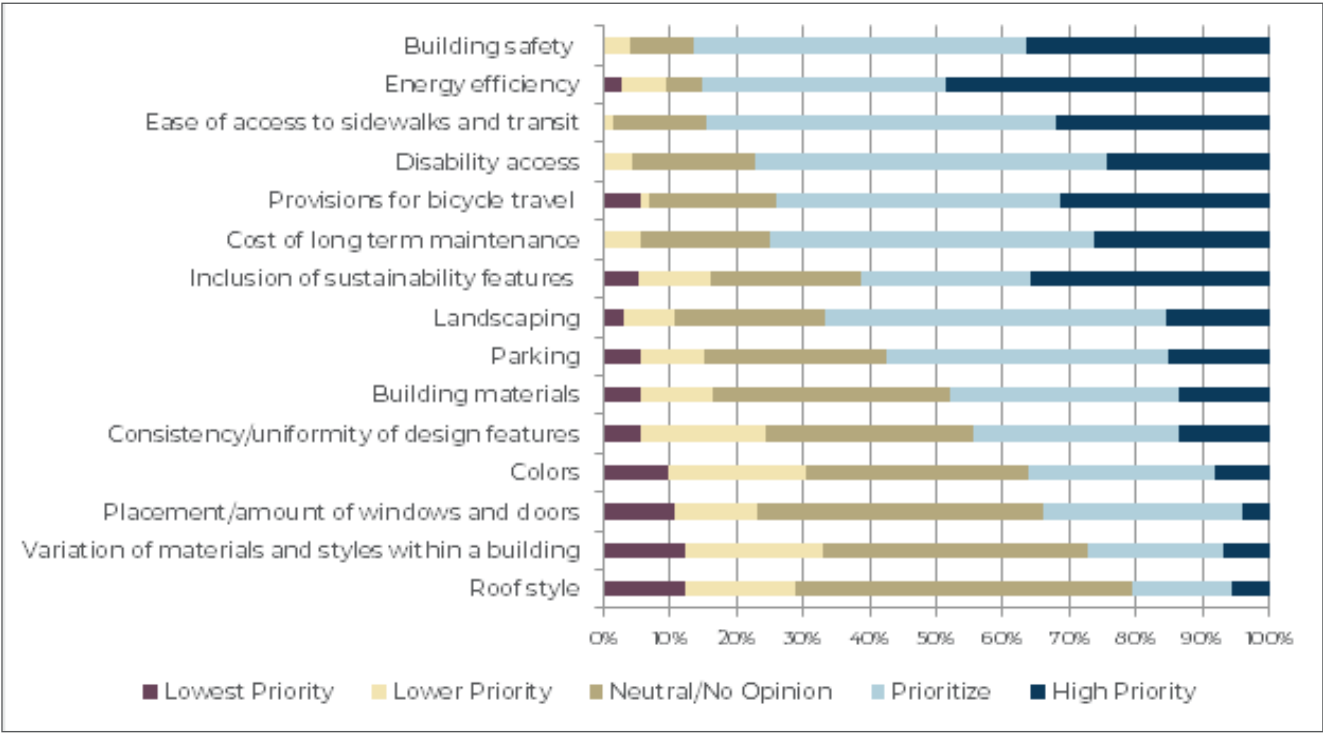
What type of HOUSING would best meet your future needs?



This question asked participants to consider their personal situation and what type of housing would best meet their future needs. Traditional single-family homes were the highest preference, however there was notable desires for smaller lot single family, senior housing and multi-family housing. This suggests that the City may want to maintain its primarily single-family residential development pattern but provide opportunities for the other highly desired housing types at key locations.

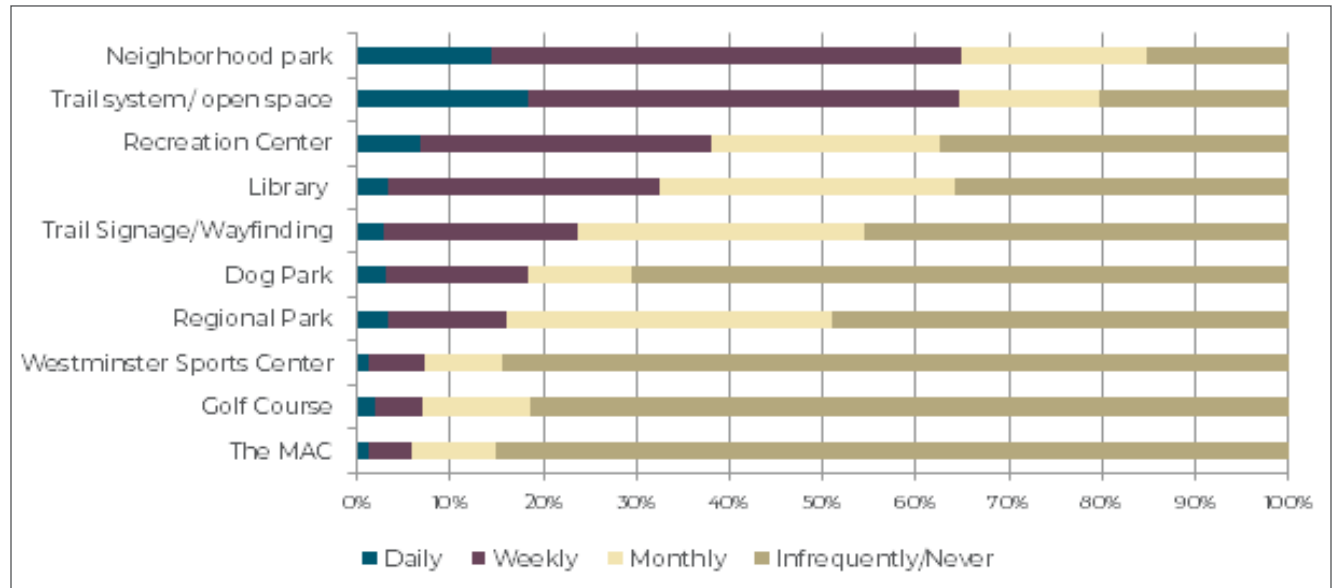
Which DESIGN ELEMENTS are the most important to you?

This question was meant to more directly inform [Code Forward](#) on design related preferences that often get discussed during Comprehensive Plan land use decisions. By analyzing results with the most “prioritize” and “high priority” selections, the following elements are ranked highest: 1) Building



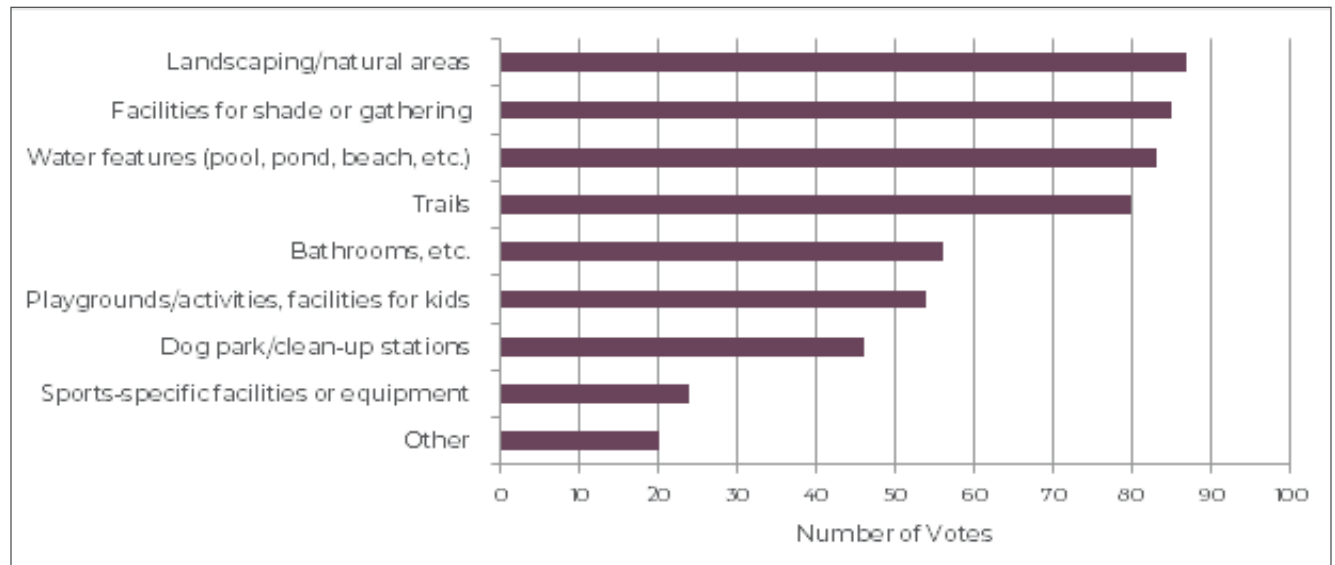
safety, 2) Energy efficiency, 3) Ease of access to sidewalks and transit 4) tie between cost of long-term maintenance, disability access, and provisions for bicycle travel. Interestingly within the responses, the least selected elements tend to be those that are typically included in design guidelines for new development, such as roof style, variation of materials and styles, colors, and placement of doors and windows.

How Often Do You Use the Following FACILITIES?



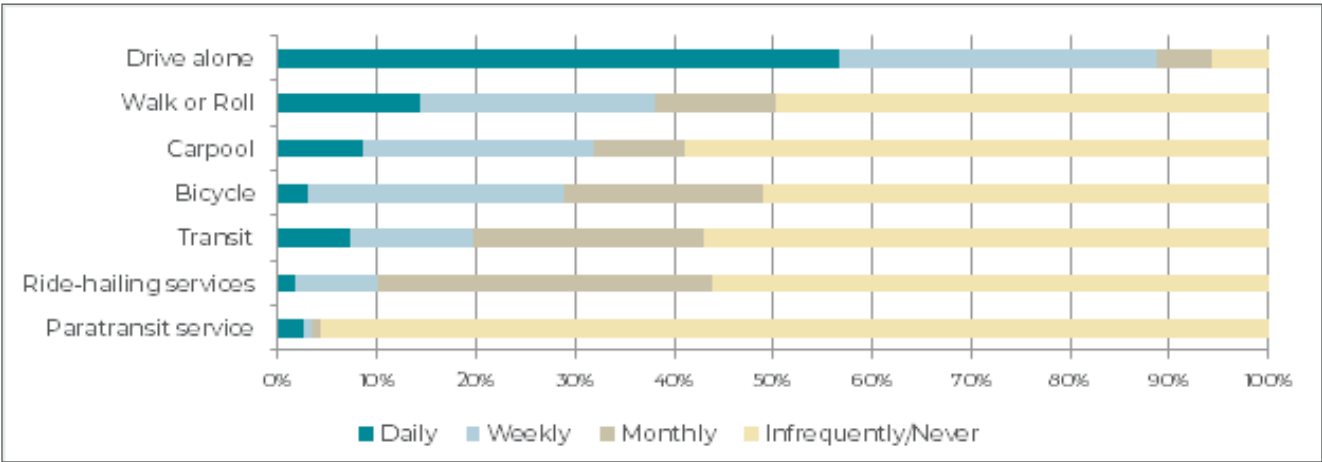
Neighborhood parks and the open space and trails system appear to be the most utilized facilities, and the MAC and Sports Center seem to be least utilized facilities by survey respondents. One potential reason for this difference could be the high number and geographic spread of neighborhood parks, compared to the single centralized community and sports centers. This also suggests the development of future neighborhoods should continue to include neighborhood parks and trail systems as the dominant types of amenities.

What AMENITY OR ACTIVITY is needed within the City?



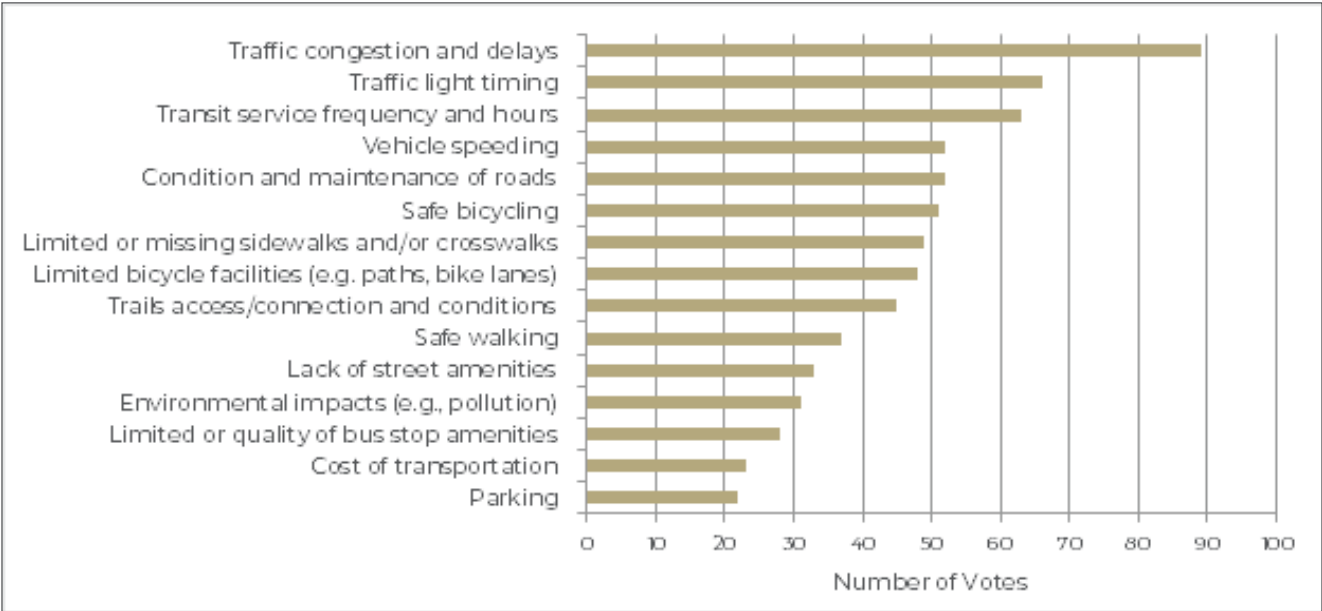
The amenities that were ranked as having the highest need include landscaping/natural areas, facilities for shade or gathering, water features, and trails. Sports-specific facilities and dog parks were ranked as the City’s lowest amenity needs according to survey respondents. Many of the written-in “Other” options include improvements to Standley Lake, educational gardens/community gardens, and more open space.

How often do you use these TRANSPORTATION MODES to get to/from work, school, errands, and social activities?



Driving alone was by far the most used daily transportation mode among survey and event respondents. Of the other choices, walk or roll, carpool, and bicycling were the most frequent choices.

What are the biggest TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY challenges?



Traffic congestion, delays and traffic light timing, and transit service frequency were ranked as the biggest transportation and mobility challenges among survey respondents. Respondents could choose up to four of the challenges and were asked to provide more detail about their mobility challenges. Many respondents indicated that the road congestion and traffic light timing is frustrating. Some said that they would like to bike or use transit more often, but gaps in trails and sidewalks or lack of safe crosswalks make it difficult to safely reach a destination if not in a vehicle.

Infrequent bus and commuter rail, coupled with inconvenient bus stop locations make transit an inconvenient choice for commuters.

Targeted Outreach

The following two events – Latino Festival, and Hmong Outreach – included discussions with two specific communities. Read more about these events and the community input below.

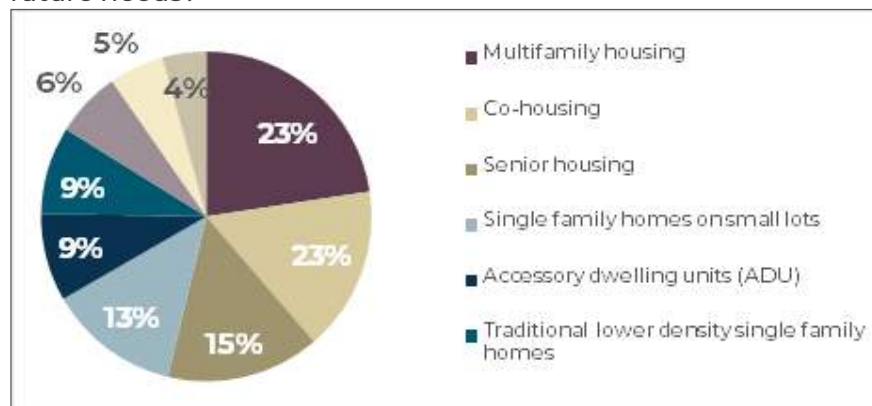
Latino Festival

The purpose of the Latino Festival was to inform community members of the [Westminster Forward](#) planning projects. Participants at the Latino Festival were asked questions about the needs of the City of Westminster and its residents, and the results of their efforts totaled 924 dots placed on the exercise boards.

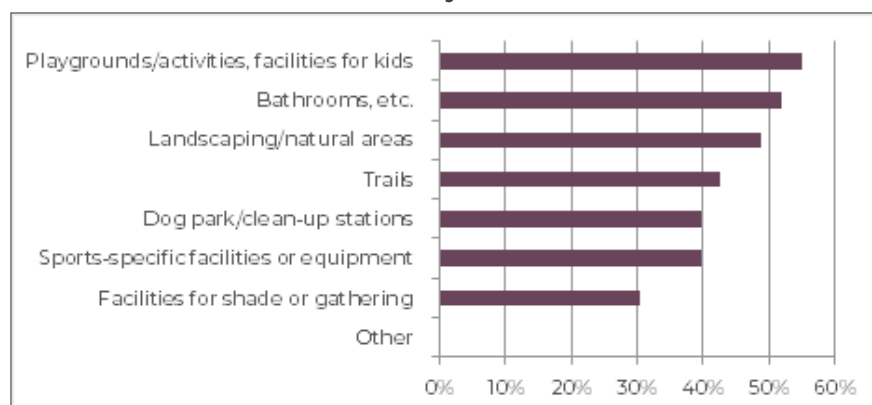
While exercise results generally echoed responses from other 2019 community engagement activities, the following two graphs summarize key results that differ from similar questions presented in other summer 2019 outreach—specifically the preferred housing types and park amenities desired. In regard to housing types, festival respondents focused more on multifamily housing and senior housing as compared to the community at large results described above. In regard to park amenities, festival responses focused on playgrounds and activities for children, while online responses saw higher percentages for trails, landscaping and natural areas.



Which type of HOUSING would best meet your immediate future needs?



What AMENITY OR ACTIVITY do you feel is needed within the City of Westminster?



Hmong Outreach

The purpose of this neighborhood meeting was to engage the Hmong community and identify issues and priorities. During the meeting, the participants were asked about how to improve the garden itself, housing availability, access to services and transportation. Below are the highlights from the conversation:

Improvements to the Garden: There were concerns about vandalism and safety and the need for better signage and fencing. Access to the road and parking lot improvements would be beneficial. Generally, the gardeners wanted confirmation that the garden would continue and could be expanded in the future.

Housing/Aging: Affordability is a big issue for this community, as many are retired and/or widowed. Many live in poverty and rely on what they can grow in the garden. Single-family housing is too expensive to sustain and there were concerns about isolation and loneliness when living alone. There was significant interest in affordable senior housing communities.

Transportation: Many older community members do not drive but are also uncomfortable or do not understand public transportation. There is a fear of getting lost and many rely on children and friends for rides. There was interest in an organized tour for bus and B-Line transit.

Access to Services: Few participants indicated that they use the MAC, which is only a few blocks away from the garden. They would be interested in a tour to understand what programs are available.

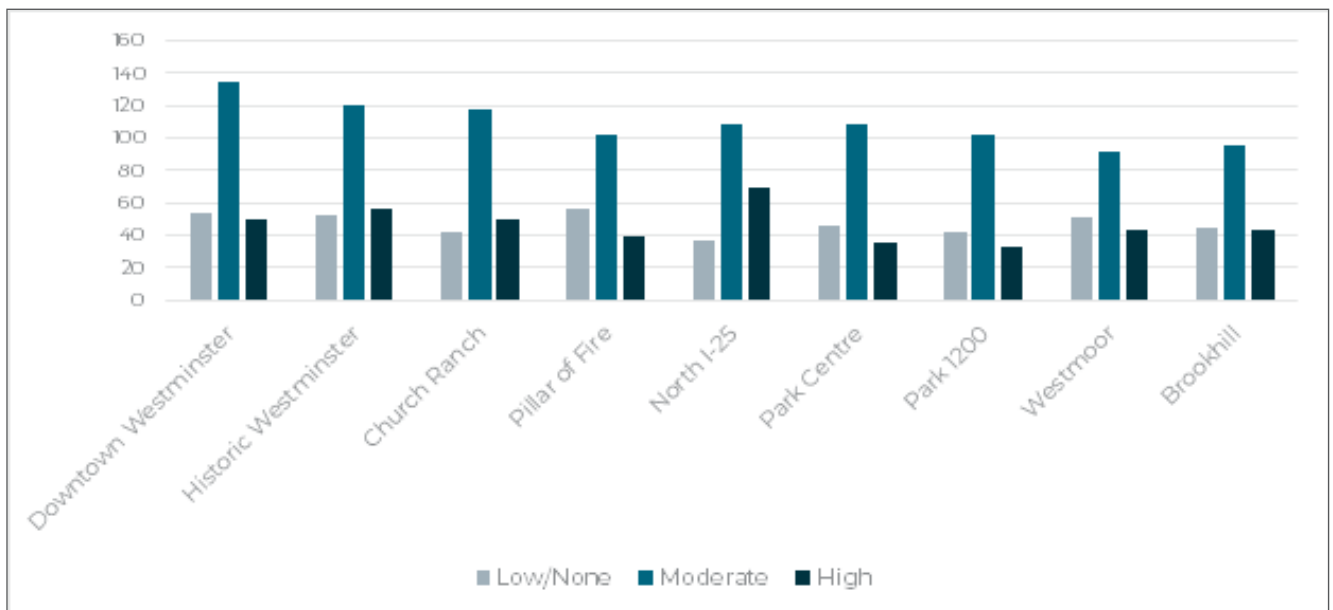


PEOPLE, PLACES, AND PLANS EVENTS & QUESTIONNAIRE #5

Two large format open house events were held at different locations in Westminster to offer the public opportunities to learn about and participate in each of the six *Westminster Forward* planning efforts. At these drop-in events, participants were asked to share input to targeted questions by voting with dots. The event questions mirrors Questionnaire #5 online, available online from October through November 2019, garnered a total of 598 responses. The following tables summarize the results, both from the open houses and the online activities.

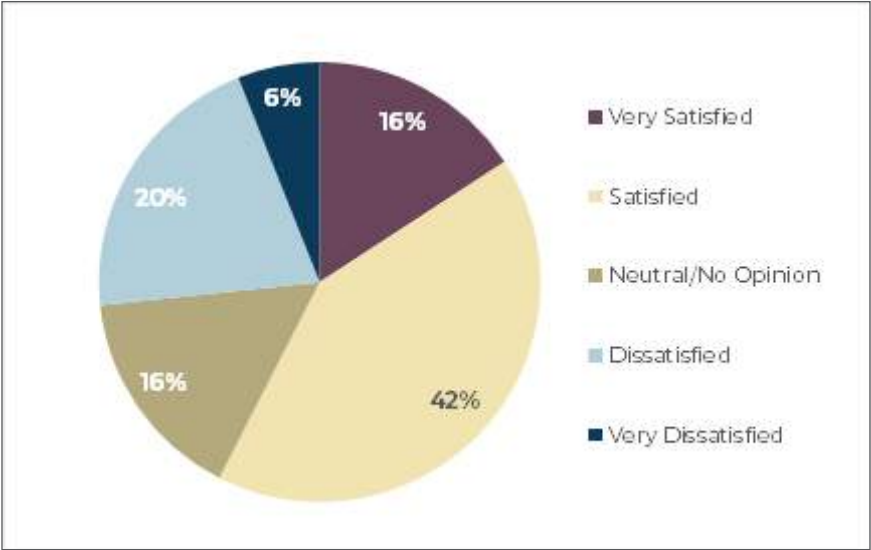


How much RESIDENTIAL is appropriate in the following areas, compared to commercial or employment uses?



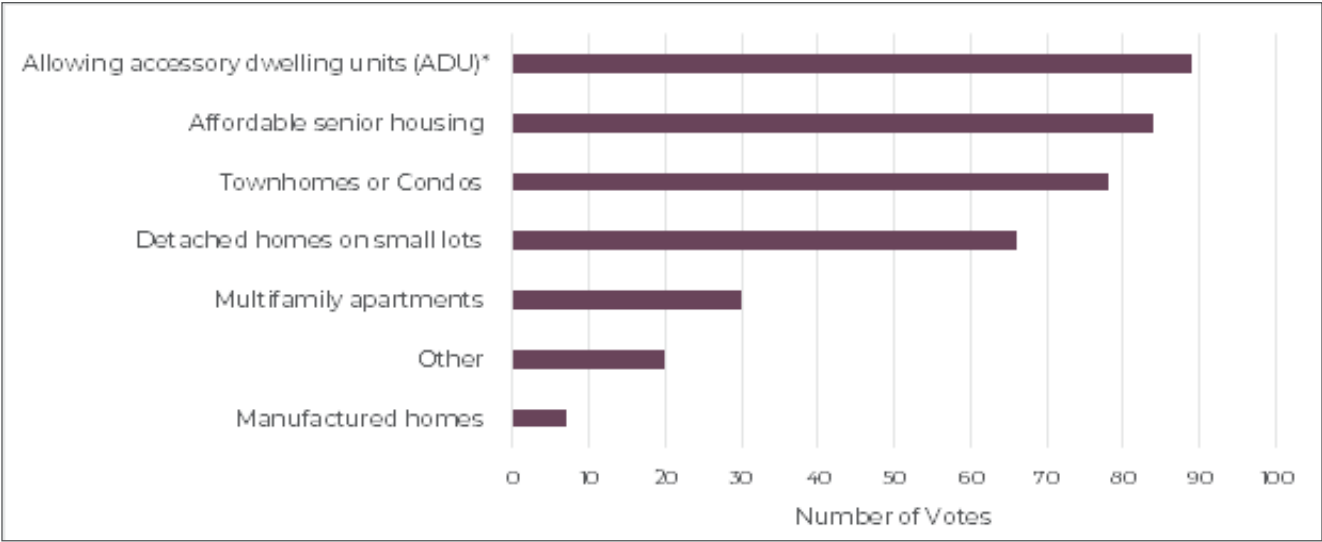
Early in the planning process, and illustrated in the land use and visual preference results within 2018 Opportunity Area exercise, housing was identified as integral within the development/ redevelopment of: Downtown Westminster, Historic Westminster, and Pillar of Fire. The concept that is emerging is the formation of “Neighborhood Units” where residential development is correlated with commercial, employment and amenities. The results show that residents would generally like to see a housing component in each of these areas. However, housing was seen as a less important land use and one that should be limited within: Park Centre, Park 1200, and Westmoor which are generally more employment focused areas.

How satisfied are you with HOUSING OPTIONS in Westminster?



In earlier events and questionnaires, many respondents expressed concern over the high rate of housing development, but also expressed a desire to see a diversity of housing types. This and the following question asked respondents what types of housing would most provide for their needs. Smaller format housing, including ADUs, affordable senior housing and townhomes or condos were the top three resulting choices (shown below).

Which of the following types of HOUSING would best meet your community's needs?



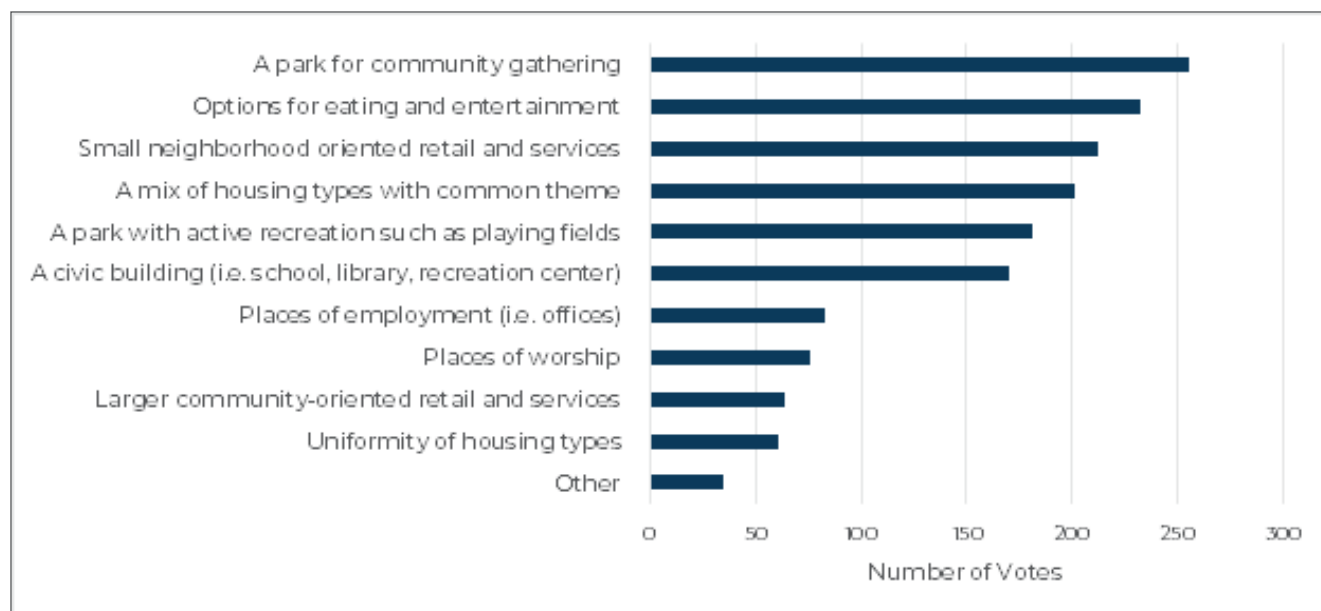
**ADUs are defined as added living quarters such as multi-generational “granny flats”, an in-home apartment, or tiny homes that are either attached to or detached from a house on the same lot.*

This question is similar to housing questions in the 2019 Summer Outreach and Questionnaire #4, however in this case participants were asked to think not just of their personal housing situation but of their perceptions for the housing needs of the greater community and therefore the results varied. Also, respondents could identify more than answer choice in this case. The previous question included traditional detached and smaller lot homes as multiple-choice answers—which were the highest selected answers, while this question focused more on multifamily housing and smaller unit types. In this case, the “Other” write-in comments included large lots and single-family neighborhoods, starter homes, and income-restricted housing.

How could Westminster IMPROVE housing options?

Data was collected through open-ended questions for respondents. Generally, the responses indicated a desire for more one-level condos and transitional/senior housing options, overall more affordable options specifically for the “missing middle,” and a mix of downtown rentals with owner occupied housing.

Thinking about your household, the IDEAL NEIGHBORHOOD would include...

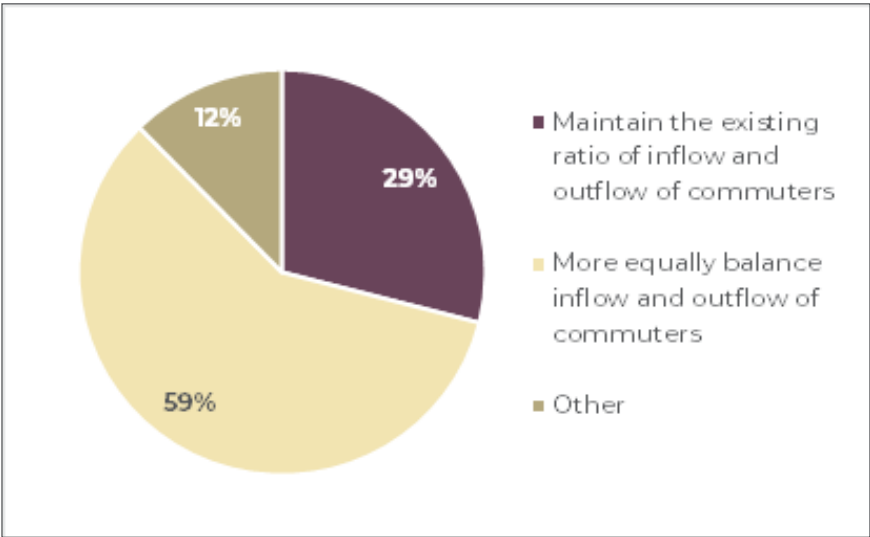


This input further informs the components of the Neighborhood Unit concept. Respondents could select multiple items in this question. Much like the results within Questionnaire #4, these results identify a preference for additional parks for community gathering, eating and drinking establishments, and small neighborhood-oriented retail and services. Interestingly, within the results, very few respondents selected uniformity of housing types. On the contrary, one of the highest response rates showed a preference for a mixture of housing types, along with parks for community gathering, and small, neighborhood-oriented retail and services. It may be worth noting that large community-oriented retail and services was not highly selected.



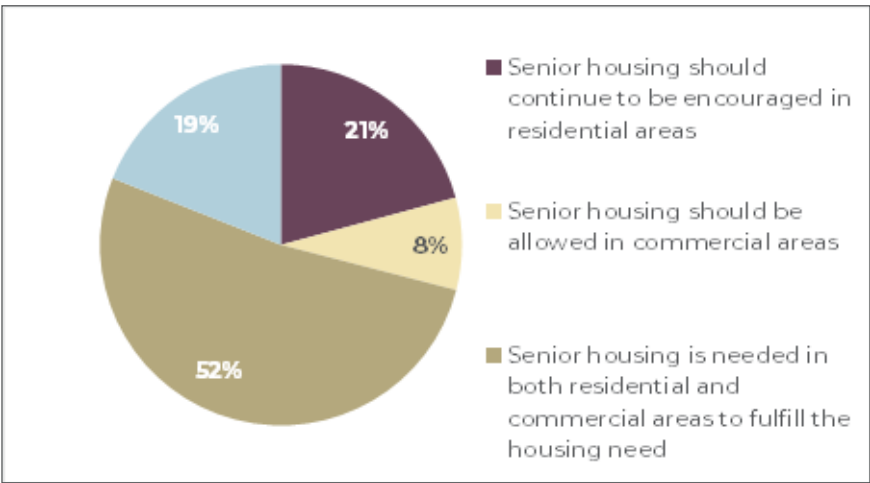
Data on Westminister commute patterns (37,699 commute in / 49,843 commute out daily) were shared with survey respondents to inform their answer to the following question.

Should the Comprehensive Plan strive to:



Over half of respondents understand the need to more equally balance the inflow and outflow of commuters, echoing early responses to key issues to be more economically sustainable/resilient as well as ensure the efficiency of the transportation system. The "Other" written-in comments indicate that this is less of an economic development issue than a transportation issue or housing availability issue.

Recently the City has been approached to consider allowing various types of SENIOR HOUSING in commercial areas. Where should SENIOR HOUSING be allowed?



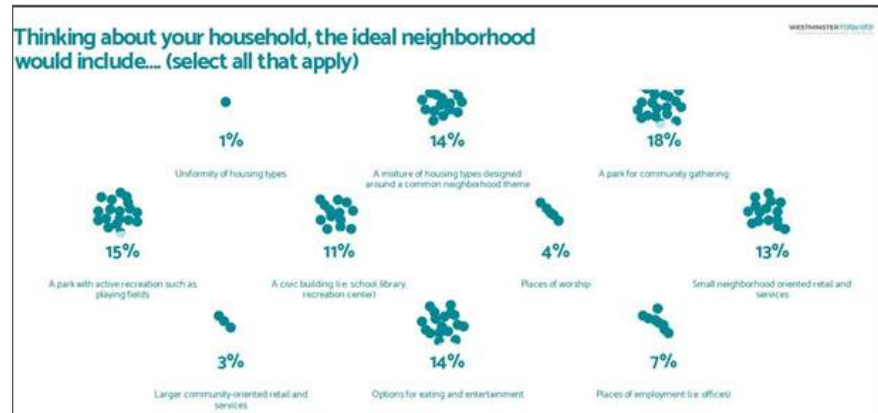
The existing Comprehensive Plan provides for senior housing in residential areas. Feedback from the community showed a need for more senior housing. As a result of this feedback, the

Additional 2019 Events

In order to continue to reach a cross section of the Westminster community, a presence was established at Harvest Festival, the City employees Wellness Fair and at the Taste of Westminster hosted by the Westminster Chamber of Commerce.

Harvest Festival

City staff occupied a large tent at the 2019 Harvest Festival to draw people to participate in online questionnaire #5. Those who chose to participate “on the spot” had their responses shown in real time on a monitor displayed at the booth.



City of Westminster Wellness Fair

This event was held for City of Westminster staff, to ensure awareness of *Westminster Forward* plans and provide input through online questionnaire #5.

Taste of Westminster

This Westminster Chamber of Commerce event included a station where City staff displayed exhibits for *Westminster Forward* and Downtown Westminster and provided another opportunity to connect with local businesses and stakeholders.



Meeting in a Box 2019

City staff designed a “meeting in the box” activity to provide an alternative to those unable to attend the public meetings and events and/or who were not able to participate online. The activity incorporated questions similar to those in online questionnaire #5 with a focus on questions related to land use, housing and employment. Two “kitchen table” style meetings were held by request from local residents.

Using the worksheets provided, feedback was given on several topics relevant to [Westminster Forward](#). Ensuring water supply was the most important issue to attendees of both groups. Generally conversation topics focused on the need for status reports on water supply and sewer issues; a timeline on Downtown development and information on construction and parking; proposed development at 102nd and Sheridan; and a graphic for the development review process. Attendees also discussed the need for and interest in a greater diversity in housing types and pricing.

Homebuilders Association

A second meeting with the Homebuilders Association as part of the 2019 outreach campaign however, this meeting occurred in January 2020 due to difficulty scheduling around the holidays. Key takeaways from earlier public engagement was shared as well as concepts for [Code Forward](#).

Peer Review

A plan-making discussion was also held with planning staff from Adams County, Arvada, Jefferson County, Northglenn, Thornton as well as the planner for Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport. Representatives of Broomfield and Federal Heights were also invited but did not attend. Issues pertinent to the shared borders were addressed as well as best practices in community engagement.

B.5 2020 ACTIVITIES

With 2018 and 2019 community engagement in hand, staff development of the draft 2040 Comprehensive Plan document began with a series of “plan-writing” workshops in February 2020 attended by nine different city departments. This generally established the structure for the future Plan using the Guiding Principles resulting from community engagement and the *Westminster Forward* themes as organizing elements. Presentations were also done to the City’s Executive Leadership Team. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, staff work programs and priorities were adjusted to provide focus on urgent activities to support the City’s resiliency. A number of key City staff involved with the Plan effort were provided time to focus on immediate COVID-19 response efforts with work on the Plan resuming in late 2020.

Due to the onset of COVID-19 related restrictions on public gathering, closure of facilities and general concerns for public health, an additional “Meeting in a box” activity was created for small groups to host their own conversations about the Comprehensive Plan. The materials reviewed the Plan’s Guiding Principles of **Thriving Community, Healthy Places, Great Neighborhoods** and **Managed Growth** and asked participants to identify existing characteristics that support these guiding principles, how the Guiding Principles could be realized in the neighborhood of the respondent and impediments to attaining the Guiding Principles. New topics planned for introduction with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan were identified to gauge reaction by the respondents. These topics include food access, human services, strategies for declining retail, housing maintenance and neighborhood services and the needs of changing demographics.

In response to the questions regarding the Guiding Principles, the following written comments are noted:

- Continued support for City’s open space and trail programs
- Concern for the amount of multi-family development
- Concern for water availability
- The need for improved communication to residents and neighborhoods
- Importance of code enforcement to preserving existing neighborhoods and housing stock
- The need for assistance to forming neighborhood associations and HOAs
- Concern for build out and limited opportunities to annex more land, and what happens when there is no remaining land
- Revenue diversification
- Financial resiliency
- Concern for aging infrastructure
- Concern for competition with other cities

In response to the new Plan content identified, the following reactions are noted:

- Support for food access with suggestions for multi-family and residential back yard boxes and the need to establish food deliver programs for the senior population.
- The need to include regional players in human services programming, rather than a go-at-it-alone approach and notably with homeless and seniors the need to include counties, state government and faith-based organizations.
- A suggestion was made for the City to consider allowing dispensaries to mitigate the continued decline of brick and mortar retail.

-
- Support for increased neighborhood services including the need to assist in the formation of neighborhood associations, greater code enforcement and crime prevention.
 - There were numerous comments on how to better support the growing senior population. Suggestions included the need to allow for patio home communities and affordable multifamily, the need to provide services to seniors in their homes, the need for law enforcement entities to be prepared to address senior issues, and the need to cooperate with County, nonprofits and other providers of senior services.

The future land use map is an area of concern in feedback from both residents and property owners and/or potential developers. Whenever possible Staff has explained that the land use map functions as a graphical representation of the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan on matters such as a housing, economic development, utilities and transportation and thus the importance of providing input on issues that the Plan is addressing through this update. Given that the vast majority of the City's land area is expected to remain stable, only limited and strategic changes to the land use map are expected, further emphasizing the need for plan content on the sustainability and resiliency of existing neighborhoods.

Numerous comments both from City residents and non-residents submitted through Comprehensive Plan forums in 2020 were in the form of statements of opposition to pending development applications before the City for the proposed Uplands project and the proposal by Berkeley Homes adjacent to 102nd Avenue and Sheridan. These development applications are currently under review by City staff based on existing plans, codes and policies and will be heard by City Council in a future quasi-judicial public hearing. Staff has a responsibility to ensure comments on pending development applications are saved and compiled for the public record, therefore when comments are received that reference a particular development project by name they are reviewed and considered in the context of the forthcoming 2040 Comprehensive Plan and then such comments are routed to the City staff members responsible for these projects. As such these public comments will be included when these cases move forward to Planning Commission and City Council for consideration.

Several property owners of vacant land or buildings have been in contact with City staff regarding the status of their land as it pertains to the forthcoming 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Staff has communicated with these owners on the framework of the Plan, its relationship to other [Westminster Forward](#) plans and the need to ensure any potential land use maps are thoughtfully considered in the overall policy context of the Plan.

B.6 2021 OUTREACH

The first full draft Plan was made available through an interactive online platform to facilitate review by the community and referral agency partners. In addition to the online interface, copies of the Plan were made available at both the College Hill and Irving Street libraries. Communication included a series of news releases, social media posts, notification to those on the Westminster Forward subscribers list, contacts of all registered homeowner associations (HOAs), liaisons to City boards and commissions, as well as the Community Development Department's developer contact list. A summary of comments received is included in Attachment 6. Through the online interface a total of 163 comments were received from 27 different people, including both City residents and residents of unincorporated Adams County. Presentations were also coordinated to the Westminster Planning Commission, City Council, Westminster Chamber of Commerce and the Homebuilders Association of Metro Denver.


The Transportation, Mobility & Connections chapter received the most input with 25% of all submitted comments. This was followed by the Land Use & Development chapter with 21% of the comments and the Community Places chapter with 19% of the comments. Since the Comprehensive Plan content related to transportation and mobility is general, comments on this Westminster Forward theme have been shared with the staff coordinating the Transportation & Mobility Plan. Technical material such as right of way profiles or recommendations relative to the number of lanes on roadways are more appropriate for inclusion in the Transportation & Mobility Plan. Ensuring seamless opportunities for public input while coordinating with the appropriate plan was a goal of the coordinated Westminster Forward engagement. The number of comments by chapter is shown below:

Chapter	# of Comments	% of Total
1: Introduction and Vision	20	12
2: Community Places	31	19
3: Land Use & Development	35	21
4: Transportation, Mobility & Connections	41	25
5: Health, Wellness & Community Services	0	0
6: Economic Resilience	1	0
7: Housing & Neighborhoods	18	11
8: Utilities & Resources	2	1
9: Plan Administration	4	2
Other Comments	11	7

Most of the “other comments” not tied to a specific chapter were relative to the City’s public land dedication requirements and pending development applications that will be scheduled for future quasi-judicial hearings of City Council.

In addition to the input described above, the Comprehensive Plan was routed to referral agencies for review and comment. Notified agencies include Adams County, Adams 12 Five Star schools, Apex Parks & Recreation District, City of Arvada, City/County of Broomfield, CenturyLink, Colorado Department of Transportation, Comcast, Commuting Solutions, Crestview Water, Denver Regional Council of Governments, City of Federal Heights, Growing Home, Hyland Hills Parks & Recreation District, Jefferson County, Jefferson County Public Schools, Mile High Connects, City of Northglenn, Regional Transportation District, Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport, Smart Commute North, City of Thornton, Tri-County Health, Westminster Public Schools, and Xcel Energy. Responses were received from Adams 12 Five Star schools, Apex Parks & Recreation District, City of Arvada, City/County of Broomfield, Colorado Department of Transportation, Growing Home, Jefferson County, Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport, City of Thornton, Tri-County Health, Westminster Public Schools and Smart Commute North.

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A man with a beard, wearing a plaid shirt and an orange apron, is focused on carving a piece of wood on a workbench. The workshop is filled with various musical instruments, including violins and a banjo, hanging on the walls. Shelves in the background hold numerous small wooden carvings. The man's apron features a logo with the name "ERIC" and the text "BUILD A BASS IN A WEEK 2015".

C


COMMUNITY INDICATORS




LEGEND:



- COW:** City of Westminster
CD: Community Development
CMO: City Manager's Office
ED: Economic Development
PRL: Parks, Recreation & Libraries
PWU: Public Works & Utilities
USGBC: United States Green Building Council

This Section focuses on indicators of the community's conditions in future years. National examples of indicators include the consumer price index, the number of traffic fatalities, or the unemployment rate. Indicators used by people every day include bank account balances or vehicle fuel gauges. Indicators are used to raise awareness of community issues, inform decision-making and identify trends. The results of indicator tracking may be used to publicize good works or identify work that needs to be done. A Biennial Report indicating progress shown on plan implementation will be prepared and will include these community indicators. The report may also call for resources or policy changes needed where indicators are unfavorable. Indicator tracking will depend upon staffing, budget resources, and availability of updated data.

Table C-4. Community Indicators

Indicator	Baseline Value	Target	Data Source	Tracking Responsibility
 Land Use & Development				
Current population	June 2020 Population, PEPP	Monitor	COW, CD, GIS	COW, CD
Balanced mix of land uses	2020 land uses	Maintain	COW, CD, GIS	COW, CD
Coverage of Specific Plans	2 Specific Plans in place	Complete Specific Plans for remaining Focus Areas	COW – CD, Planning	COW, CD
Number of third-party rated development projects (LEED, Green Globes, etc.)	74	Increase	USGBC	COW, CD
Number of adopted municipal code amendments identified in the Implementation Action Plan	N/A	Increase	COW, CD, Planning	COW, CD
Acreage of strategic annexations to support the City Vision	N/A	Monitor	COW, CD, Planning	COW, CD

Indicator	Baseline Value	Target	Data Source	Tracking Responsibility
 Transportation & Mobility				
Number of TDM programs within Westminster	2	Increase	COW, CD, Transportation	COW, CD
Drive alone modal split	See Ch. 4, Figure 4-1	Reduce	US Census Bureau ACS	COW, CD
Inflow/outflow commuter balance	See Ch. 4, Figure 4-2	Improve balance	US Census Bureau ACS	COW, CD
 Health, Wellness, & Community Services				
Acres of park land	3,179	Increase	COW, PRL	COW, PRL
Number of public art installations	170	Increase	COW, PRL	COW, PRL
Quality of local public schools per citizen survey results of as “good” or “very good” (combined)	54% in 2020	Increase	COW Community Survey	CMO
Safety - results of community survey indicating feeling “very safe” or somewhat “safe” from violent and property crimes	68% and 48% respectively in 2020	Increase	COW Community Survey	CMO
ISO rating	ISO Class 1 achieved in 2019	Maintain Class 1 certification	COW, Fire	COW, Fire
 Economic & Financial Resilience				
Total employment within the city	51,089 (pre-pandemic)	Maintain or increase	COW, ED	COW – ED
Job opportunities per community survey (percentage of respondents selecting “good” or “very good”)	40% in 2020 (combined)	Maintain or increase	COW Community Survey	COW-CMO

Indicator	Baseline Value	Target	Data Source	Tracking Responsibility
Revenue diversification in sources of revenue (sales tax, property tax, fees, etc.)	2020 Budget revenue sources	Monitor	COW, CMO, Policy & Budget	COW, CMO, Policy & Budget
 Housing & Neighborhoods				
Quality of life per citizen survey (percentage of respondents selecting “good” or “very good”)	87% in 2020 (combined)	Maintain or Increase	COW Community Survey	COW-CMO
Percent of code cases achieving voluntary compliance	90%	Maintain or increase	COW, CD , Community Preservation	COW, CD
Number of registered homeowner and neighborhood associations	114	Maintain or increase	COW, CD, Administration	COW, CD, Administration
Total number of affordable housing developments	25	Increase	COW, ED	COW, ED
 Utilities & Resources				
Water usage per capita (gallons per capita per day)	126 gpcd	Decrease	COW, PWU	COW, PWU
Utility Condition Index (UCI)	41.5	Maintain or increase	COW, PWU	COW, PWU
Total number of green infrastructure projects	3 in service and 8 under design/ construction in 2020	Increase	COW, CD, Stormwater	COW, CD, Stormwater



D

ANNEXATION ANALYSIS

Annexation is the legal process by which a city adds land to its jurisdiction and is one of the most dramatic and lasting actions a municipality can take. The primary purpose of annexation is to provide public services to residents and businesses in the extraterritorial locations. This Appendix to the Comprehensive Plan establishes the framework for decisions concerning annexation of land into the City of Westminster. In tandem with the Comprehensive Plan's guiding principles, goals and policies—including the Land Use Diagram—and the city's Strategic Plan, this document will guide considerations for potential future annexation of lands into the city.

INTRODUCTION

There are two basic types of annexations: extraterritorial annexations that extend the municipal boundaries, and enclave annexations that consolidate municipal boundaries. The most common type of annexation is voluntary annexation where 50% of the record property owners representing 50% or more of the land area petition for municipal annexation. There are limited circumstances when the city may annex territory by unilateral action. Generally, this only occurs for city-owned properties or for “enclaves,” which are small pockets of territory within the unincorporated county completely surrounded by the city.

The Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) establish the basic rules for the annexation of territory into a municipality. In 1987, the Colorado Governor signed legislation (Senate Bill 45) into law requiring that municipalities have a “three-mile plan” in place before they could extend their territory by annexation. Furthermore, municipalities in Colorado are required to prepare and adopt a three-mile plan prior to annexing property into their territorial boundaries per C.R.S. 31-12-105.

The three-mile plan is a long-range plan that outlines where municipalities intend to annex property and describes how they will ensure the adequate provision of services within the newly annexed territory and the remainder of the existing municipality. This document satisfies the statutory requirements of the Colorado Revised Statutes, which require a three-mile plan to be in place prior to extraterritorial annexation. This plan functions as the city’s official “three mile plan “as required by Section 31-12-105 C.R.S.

This annexation appendix is not regulatory and does not commit to annexation of any of the identified locations. Rather this is a general framework to guide future consideration of annexations on a case-by-case basis.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Without advance planning, properties in Adams and Jefferson Counties may intensify with haphazard patterns of development, greater increases in traffic congestion, duplication of services, fiscal inequalities, and uneven standards for infrastructure and essential public services. These conditions could negatively impact the quality of life, economic development program, and ability of the City of Westminster to provide services efficiently throughout the city. Coordinating the city’s actions with other governments and agencies in the North Metro area is a step toward more effective regional planning.

Benefits of annexation for owners of land within the annexed area include access to Westminster public safety response including police, fire, emergency medical service, and animal control. City street maintenance and snow removal also facilitates access by public safety responders as well as safety and convenience for lands within annexed territory. In-city utility rates, roughly twenty percent lower than out-of-city rates are an additional benefit of

annexation. Extension of municipal ordinances also provides for city zoning, permitting, inspections, and code enforcement to ensure safe development, sanitary living conditions, and protection of property values. In-city utility rates, access to the city's portfolio of parks, recreation, libraries, arts, and cultural programming are also benefits of annexation. Finally, annexation provides residents of annexed territory the opportunity to participate in municipal governance through elections, the ability to petition the City Council and participate on city boards and commissions.

This Annexation Analysis establishes guidance to city staff when reviewing petitions for annexation and annexation of enclave areas. The Analysis identifies criteria that should be considered when a parcel of land is proposed for municipal annexation. The city has identified unincorporated parcels within three miles of the current boundaries that should be further evaluated for future annexation into the city.

CRITERIA FOR ANNEXATION

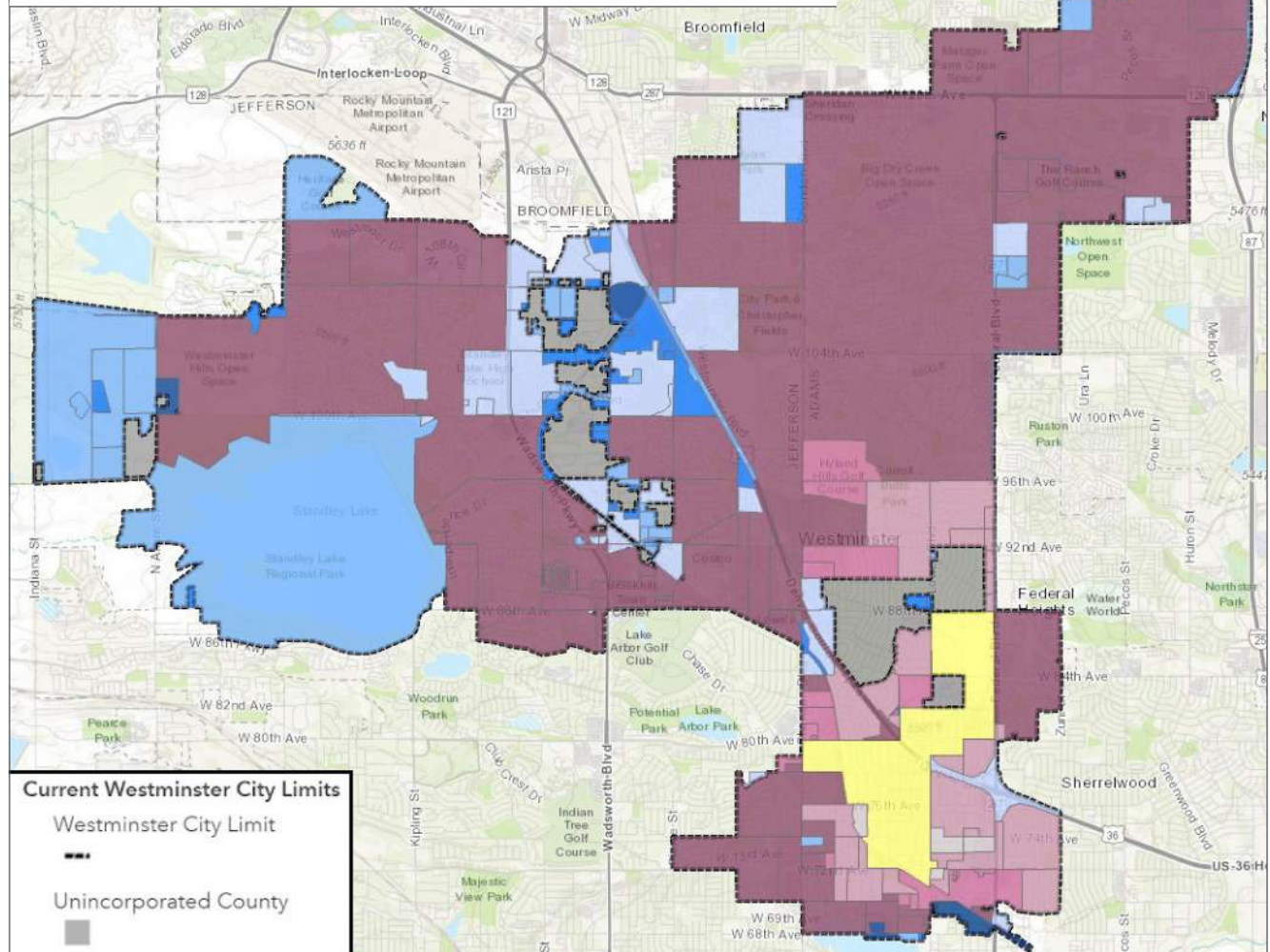
Considerations for determining feasibility of future annexation of identified parcels adjacent to the City of Westminster are outlined in the following:

1. Contribution to goal attainment of the city's Strategic Plan, Comprehensive Plan or similar municipal plan.
2. Adjacency to a Focus Area designated in the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Status as part or all of an enclave, i.e. a geographic area is completely surrounded by the City of Westminster.
4. Contribution to protecting vital municipal resources such as water supply.
5. Desirability as an open space area or park asset, or the location supports compatibility with an existing or planned open space or park.
6. Opportunities to enhance trail connections for the City of Westminster.
7. Location relative to the city's water service area.
8. Ability to be served within acceptable standards of Westminster Police, Fire, and EMS Services.
9. Amount of lane miles that would require maintenance by the City of Westminster.
10. Impacts on Westminster code enforcement resources.
11. Ability to accommodate uses and be developed or redeveloped in a manner consistent with the city's development standards resulting in higher quality development than if developed under applicable County standards.

No one criteria are controlling and each will be factored on a case-by-case basis for the geographic location in question and the greater or lesser relevance of each criteria.

Year	City Population	Growth Added in Decade	% Growth Since Previous Decade
1911-	-	INCORPORATION	-
1920	235	-	-
1930	436	+201	+85%
1940	534	+98	+22%
1950	1686	+1,152	+216%
1960	13,850	+12,164	+721%
1970	19,512	+5,662	+41%
1980	50,211	+30,699	+157%
1990	74,625	+24,414	+49%
2000	100,940	+26,315	+35%
2010	106,144	+5,204	+5%
*2019	113,166	+7,022	+7%

Figure D-1. Historic Development Pattern



GEOGRAPHY

Westminster features somewhat unusual geography as a result of the city's historic pattern of development from south to north, construction of the Boulder Turnpike in 1952 and the desire to proactively plan quality development on lands formerly within unincorporated Adams and Jefferson Counties. Roughly 80% of the city's land area is defined by annexations that occurred in 1970 through 1971. Noteworthy annexations in subsequent decades include the land for Standley Lake, Westmoor, the Church Ranch area, and North I-25. The locations described are critical sites in modern Westminster and serve as example of the importance of planning ahead for future needs, areas of housing and employment and resource protection.

EVALUATION AREAS

On the following page, Figure 1 groups the identified unincorporated parcels for potential future annexation into six areas:

- McKay Lake Vicinity Area
- Ranch Vicinity Area
- Church Ranch Vicinity Area
- Standley Lake Area
- Shaw Heights and Pillar of Fire Area
- Westminster Station Vicinity Area

With each area, a future land use diagram is included to guide planned uses upon annexation.

Table D-1 provides an overview of the analysis of each area as it compares to the identified annexation criteria.

Figure D-2. Potential Future Annexation Areas

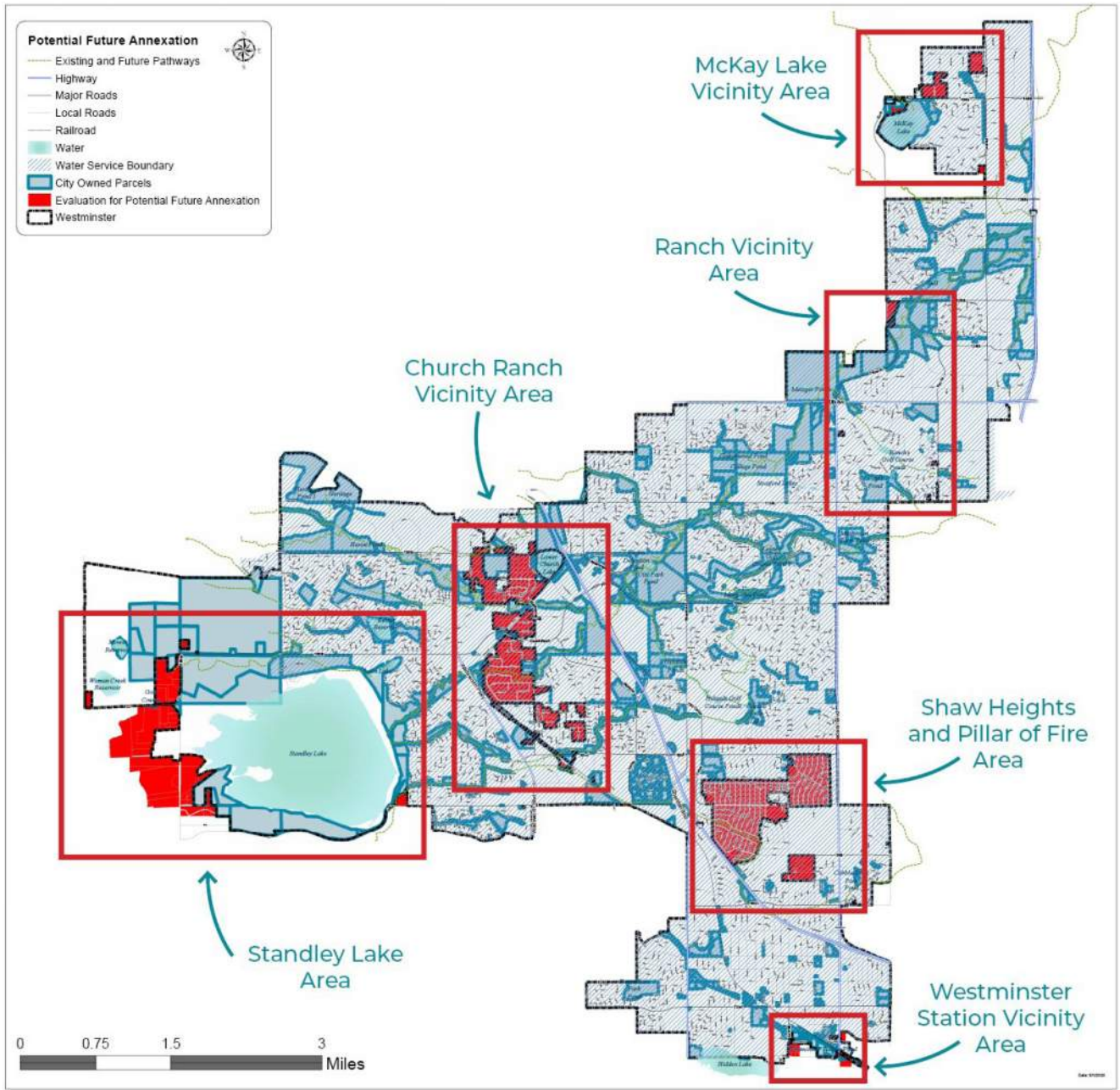
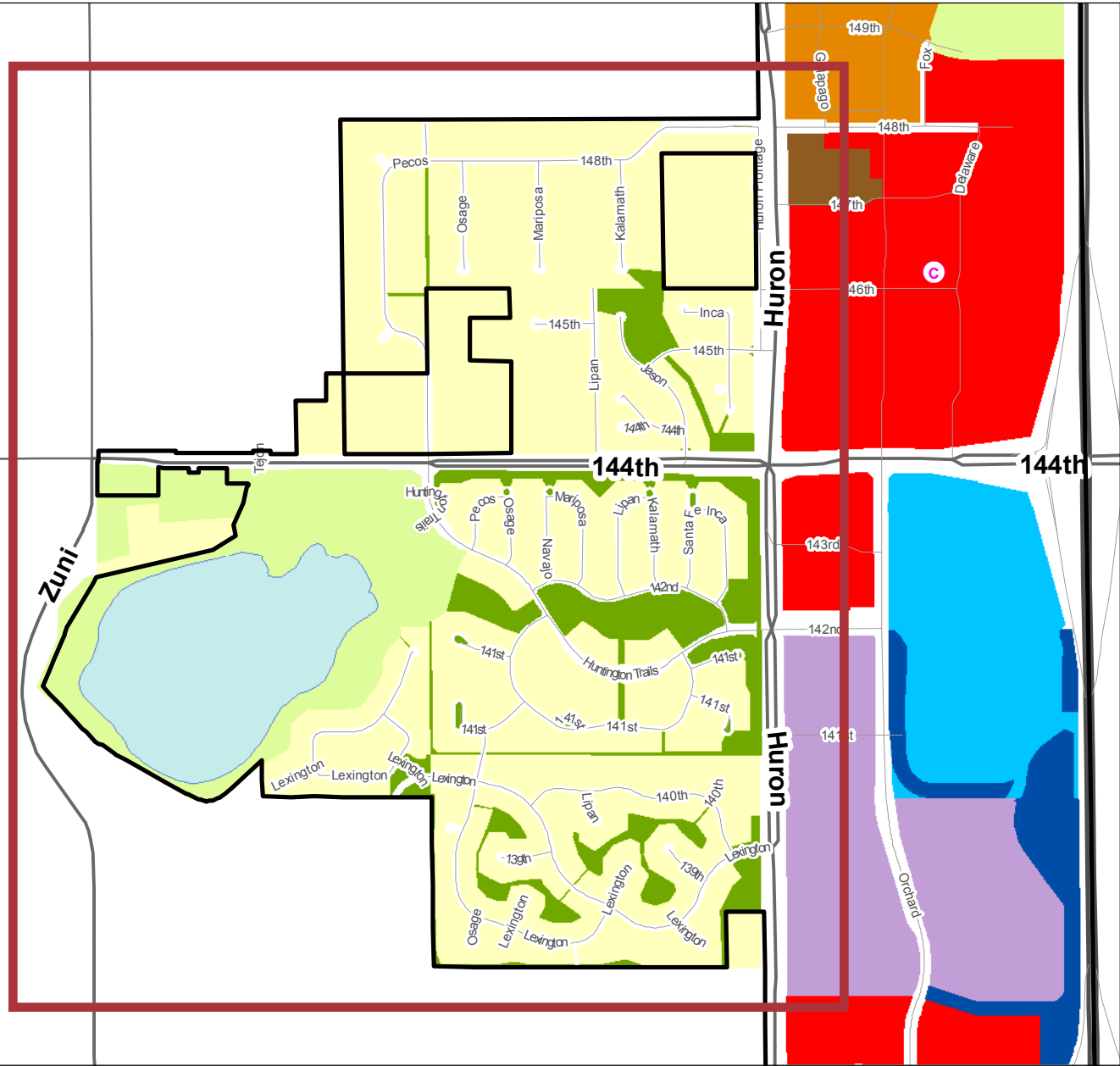


Table D-5. Evaluation Analysis with Annexation Criteria

Criteria	McKay Lake Area	Ranch Area	Church Ranch Area	Standley Lake Area	Shaw Heights and Pillar of Fire Area	Westminster Station Area
Contributes to goal attainment of the city's Strategic Plan and/or Comprehensive Plan.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Focus Area adjacency	✓		✓			✓
Enclave condition	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Protection of vital municipal resources				✓		
Desirability as open space or parks, or supports compatibility	✓	✓		✓		
Trail connections	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Westminster water service area	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Serviceable by Westminster Police, Fire and EMS	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Minimal addition of lane miles	✓	✓		✓		✓
Minimal impact on code enforcement	✓	✓		✓		✓
Can be used and developed consistent with the city's development standards.	✓	✓		✓		✓
Criteria Met:	9	8	6	7	4	5

MCKAY LAKE VICINITY AREA

Figure D-3. McKay Lake Vicinity Area



Description:

The McKay Lake Area is a grouping of 16 parcels consisting of 52.3 acres that are located amongst the northernmost portion of the City of Westminster. The area is bounded by Huron Street on the east, Zuni Street on the west, West 136th Avenue on the south, and West 148th Avenue on the north. The parcels are surrounded by either the City of Westminster or the City and County of Broomfield. The area is adjacent to the North I-25 Focus Area.

Land Use:

All of the parcels in this area are used for residential purposes, generally on small acreages. The parcels are all located within Adams County and included zoning designations of A-1, A-2, and A-3. Some of the properties include horse stables as accessory uses. The anticipated future uses are lower density residential to balance with the large amount of entitled Retail Commercial, Mixed-use, Multifamily, and Office lands situated east of North Huron.

Transportation:

These parcels have convenient access to I-25 as the major transportation corridor in this area and connections to E470/ Northwest Parkway to access regional employment areas and the Denver International Airport. The arterial streets in this area include North Huron Street, West 144th Avenue, and West 136th Avenue. The City of Westminster maintains a large portion of the local and collector streets in and adjacent to this area.

Utility Provisions:

Many of the parcels are served either by wells and septic systems or by the Mile High Water Company. All of the parcels are located within the Westminster Water Service Area.

Community Services:

This area includes parcels within the North Metro Fire Rescue District and is served police services by the Adams County Sheriff's Office. As these properties are completely surrounded by the City of Westminster and the City and County of Broomfield, 911 calls are fielded by both dispatch centers and it is common for either jurisdiction to respond to calls in these unincorporated areas.

Annexation of sites within this area is anticipated to have a minimal resource impact on municipal code enforcement due to the relatively small geography and the anticipated large lots residential development pattern.

Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

This area is named for the large open space property owned by the City of Westminster, McKay Lake Open Space. Along with this open space, there are a number of public and private parks in this area and immediate vicinity. The trails at McKay Lake Open Space connect to the I-25 Trail and eventually to the Big Dry Creek Trail, which is the main artery of Westminster's trail system. The nearest

city recreation center is the City Park facilities. The nearest city library is the College Hill Library. As with adjacent areas within the City Limits through the Colorado Libraries Collaborate! Program, any Colorado public library cardholder can check out materials from any participating library in the state. Many residents in this area have access to the Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library in Broomfield and the Anythink Library Wright Farms in Adams County. Residential development in these areas should provide full Public Land Dedication under the Westminster Municipal Code (W.M.C.) to provide opportunities for resident-serving municipal uses.

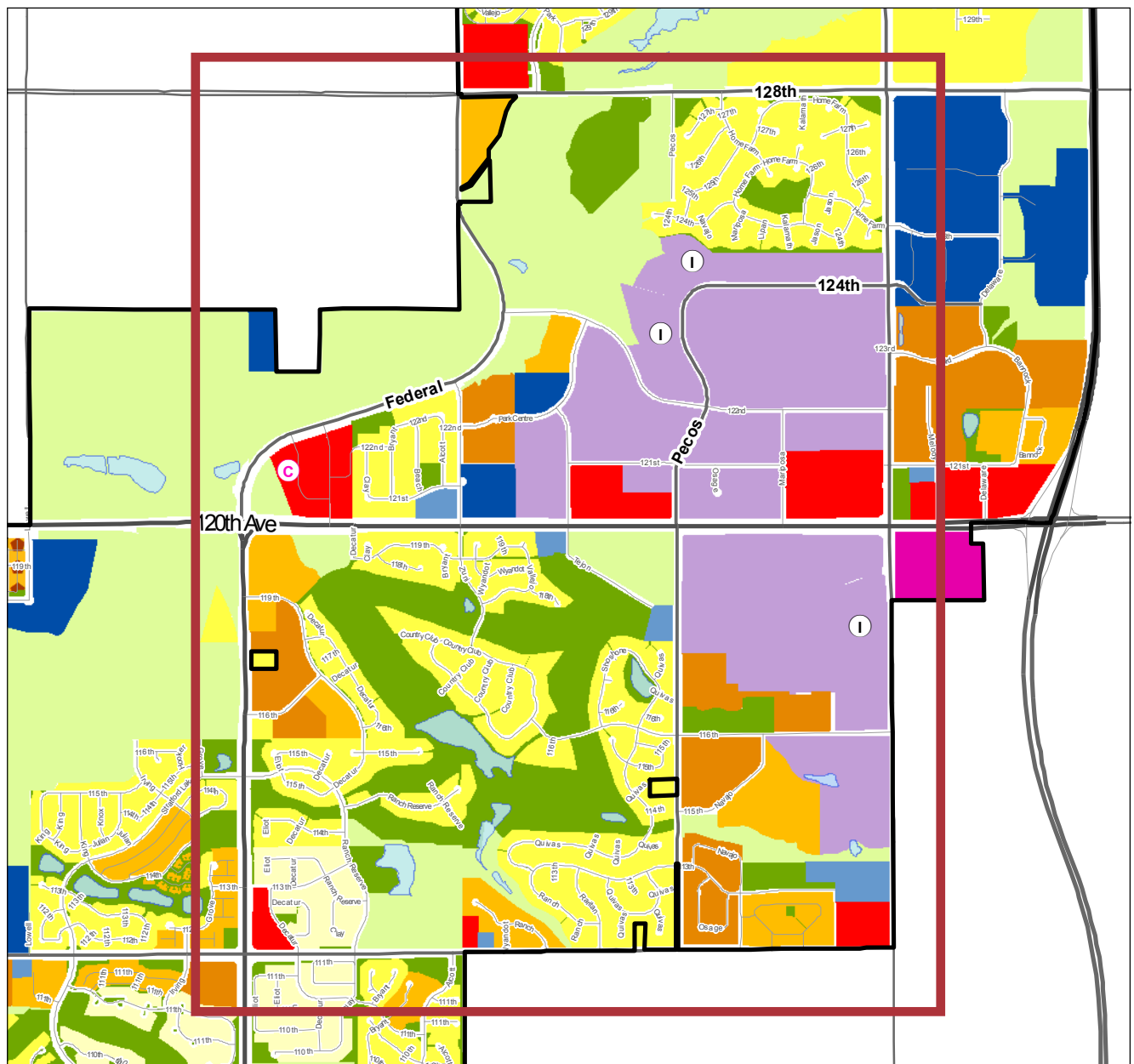
Summary:

This area has value for future annexation into the City of Westminster limits. Most of the parcels are enclaves of the city. The city already maintains the majority of the streets in this area and provides police, fire, and EMS service when needed. It is unlikely that the city would pursue any redevelopment and densification of the area, as significant development capacity exists within the established North I-25 Focus Area and sewer capacity is limited within this portion of the city.

If annexation is pursued, additional fiscal impact analysis would occur. However, it has been identified that the area does not include any commercial properties, so it would not bring additional sales tax revenue into the city. The property taxes from large-lot residential properties are unlikely sufficient to pay for the cost of extending municipal services.

RANCH VICINITY AREA Legend

Figure D-4. Ranch Vicinity Area



Description:

The Ranch Vicinity Area includes only five unincorporated parcels consisting of 16 acres. The area is bounded by Pecos Street on the east, Federal Boulevard on the west, West 112th Avenue on the south, and West 128th Avenue on the north. The parcels are either enclaves within the city or they are surrounded by the City of Westminster and the City and County of Broomfield. These areas are convenient to employment opportunities in the Park Centre and Park 1200 area, as well as the Wagon Road Park-n-Ride that has express bus service to Downtown Denver. For these reasons, it is expected there will be a desire for these parcels to develop in the future.

Land Use:

The three parcels south of West 120th Avenue are all residential properties with occupied residences. Of the two properties located near the intersection of West 128th Avenue and Zuni Street, the south property is owned by the City of Westminster and an annexation application was filed in 2015. The north parcel is privately owned and has a vacant house on the property. All of the properties are zoned A-3. If annexed, the anticipated development pattern is low to medium density residential use compatible with adjacent residential development and which can provide housing opportunities for employers in the vicinity such as in Park Centre and Park 1200.

Transportation:

The parcels in this evaluation area have convenient access to I-25 and are served by arterials including West 120th Avenue, West 128th Avenue, West 112th Avenue, Federal Boulevard, and Pecos Street. The nearby local and collector streets are either maintained by the City of Westminster, the City of Northglenn, or the City and County of Broomfield. The Wagon Road Park-n-Ride is nearby and provides express bus service to Downtown Denver and service to Denver International Airport.

Utility Provisions:

The parcels are all located within the Westminster Water Service area.

Community Services:

The parcels are served by the North Metro Fire Rescue District and the Adams County Sheriff's Office. Due to their location, the city would likely be the first responder to any 911 calls. The unincorporated parcels are small in size and population, and likely will not generate a significant amount of service calls unless there were significant changes in use and intensification.

Annexation of sites within this area is anticipated to have a minimal resource impact on municipal code enforcement due to the relatively small geography and the anticipated residential development scheme.

Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

The Big Dry Creek Open Space bisects this area and provides some direct connections to the parcels. The Big Dry Creek Park, Stratford Lakes Park, and Ranch Park are near these properties. On-street and off-street trails and trail connections in this area are numerous. The closest city recreation center is the City Park facilities. The closest city library is the College Hill Library.

Summary:

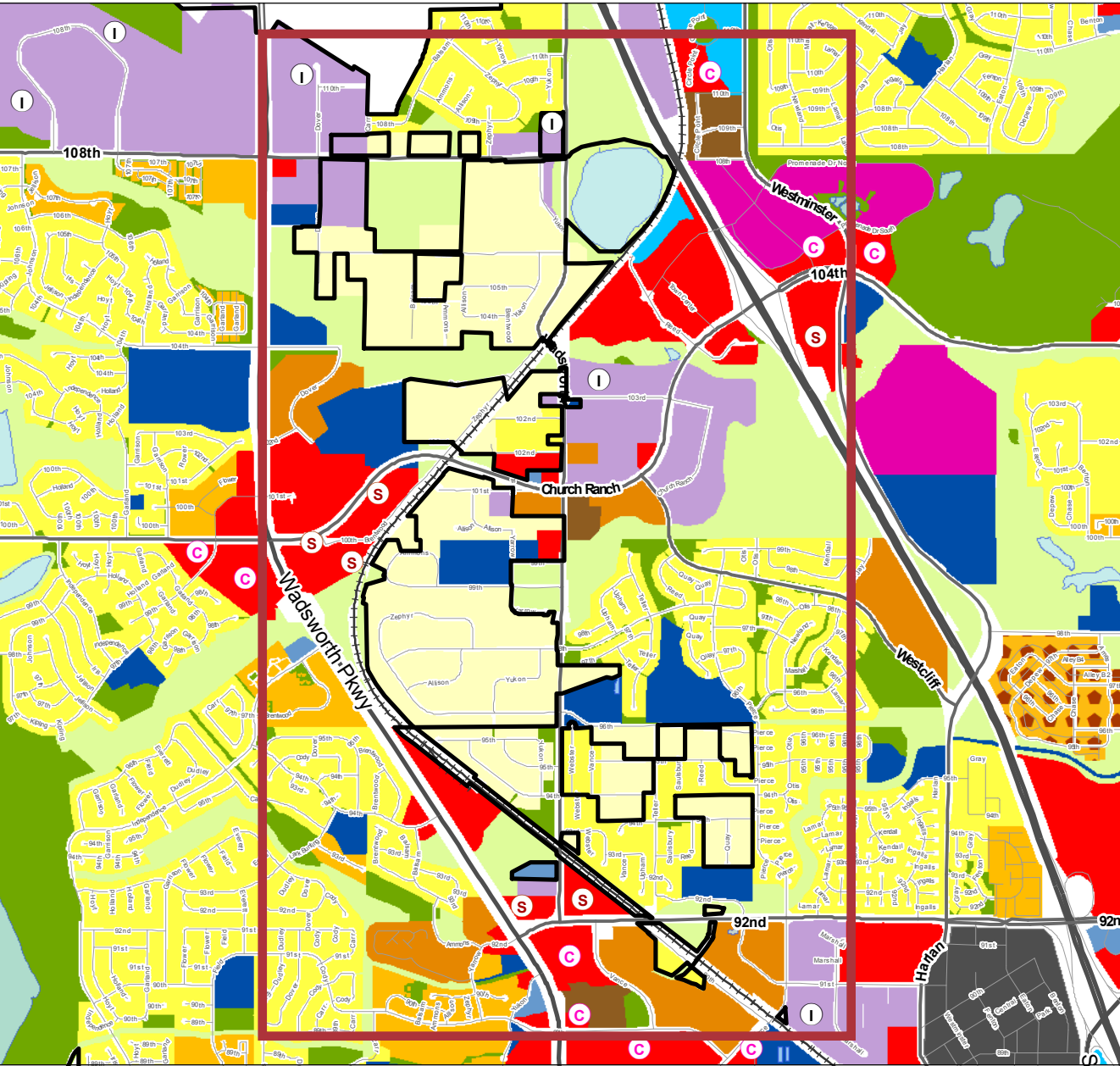
The three parcels south of West 120th Avenue are good candidates to consider for future annexation. They are already developed residences that currently use city roads and services. Given that these parcels feature no commercial uses, they would likely not provide substantial tax revenue. The large vacant property located at the intersection of West 128th Avenue and Zuni Street presents the greatest opportunity for annexation. The property could be developed for residential purposes that could further the city's goals on housing and the city could regulate the type and quality of development to ensure compatibility with the adjacent Big Dry Creek Open Space. As the property could not be annexed into Broomfield without the action of the State Legislature, it is unlikely that this property could develop without the City of Westminster agreeing to provide water and sewer services.

CHURCH RANCH VICINITY AREA

Figure D-5. Church Ranch Vicinity Area

Legend

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Residential Estate | Neighborhood Office |
| Residential Low Density | Employment-Office/Institutional Campus |
| Residential Medium Density | Public/Quasi Public |
| Suburban Multi-Family | Commercial |
| Urban Multi-Family | Mixed-Use Activity Center |
| Mixed-Use Neighborhood | Parks/Golf Courses |
| Specific Area Plan | Open Space/Creek Corridor |
| Employment-Flex | Agricultural/Conservation Area |
- (C) Commercial Mixed Use (S) Service Commercial (I) Industrial



Description:

The Church Ranch Vicinity Area is a large grouping of 336 parcels consisting of 400.3 acres located in the central portion of the city. The area is bounded by US 36 on the east, Wadsworth Parkway on the west, West 88th Avenue on the south, and West 112th Avenue on the north. The parcels are all enclaves within the city. This area is in close proximity to the Church Ranch Focus Area and has convenient access to both the Brookhill and Downtown Focus Areas. These parcels also have proximity to employment opportunities in the Westmoor area and others along the US 36 corridor. For these reasons it is appropriate to evaluate the potential for future annexation of this area.

Land Use:

The majority of the parcels are small residential acreages, however some commercial uses can be found in the area. The properties are all located within Jefferson County and include a wide range of zoning. Zoning in this area includes P-D, A-1, A-2, MR-1, R-1, R-2, SR-1, SR-2, and C-1. Jefferson County's North Plains Plan identifies a number of uses within these zoning categories that are discouraged or prohibited, for example non-residential uses that may result in nuisances.

Should the city annex these locations, it would seek to honor the development pattern identified in the North Plains Plan. The city would also be cognizant of the presence of the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport and, where appropriate, ensure uses that are compatible with the existing and planned air space activities. Figure D-5 more particularly identifies planned land uses if annexed into Westminster.

Consolidation of smaller parcels into larger development sites is essential to developing and/or redeveloping many of these sites, particularly in the area along Wadsworth Boulevard between Church Ranch Boulevard and the BNSF underpass.

Transportation:

This area has access to US 36 and arterials including Wadsworth Parkway, West 92nd Avenue, and Church Ranch Boulevard. Many of the local streets are maintained by Jefferson County and are not compliant with City of Westminster specifications. US 36 features express bus service from Downtown Denver to Boulder with a station at Church Ranch Boulevard, however connectivity from these parcels to the RTD station is circuitous and not well supported by "first mile, final mile" connections. The recent increase in population in the surrounding area, including within Broomfield, has created traffic issues on many of the collector and local streets in the area due to cut through traffic between the locations of housing and employers.

Utility Provisions:

These parcels are generally served by a well and septic system or were part of the former Standley Lake Water and Sanitation District. The district was absorbed into the city's water and sanitary

system. All of the parcels are within the city's Water Service Area. One very small site, roughly 0.28 acres, located on Pierce next to the BNSF railroad, should be further evaluated due to its immediate proximity to the city's Semper Treatment Plan and Clear Well.

Community Services:

The parcels are all served by the North Metro Fire Rescue District and the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. Given the proximity to Westminster Fire and Police Stations, the city regularly responds to calls in this area.

Annexation of sites within this area could potentially have significant impact on municipal code enforcement due to the number of existing developed uses not in compliance with city ordinances and activities such as outdoor storage, unpaved surfaces, and varying levels of maintenance and upkeep.

Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

The Church Ranch Vicinity Area includes several city owned open spaces and parks that can provide some limited services to the residents. The large unincorporated areas do not feature any parks, but they are located within the Apex Park and Recreation District whose Lake Arbor Center is the nearest facility. A missing gap in the city's Big Dry Creek Open Space, and only stretch of on-street trail for the Big Dry Creek Trail, cuts through the middle of this area. This area is located between the West View Recreation Center and the City Park Recreation facilities. The nearest city library is College Hill Library. Through the Colorado Libraries Collaborate! Program, any Colorado public library cardholder can check out materials from any participating library in the state. Many residents use Jefferson County's Standley Lake Branch located adjacent to 88th Avenue and Kipling Street.

Summary:

This area presents a strategic annexation opportunity given its adjacency to three Focus Areas, areas of employment and its central location, however staffing and resource impacts to the city are a consideration. Municipal impacts include a burden in road maintenance, fire and police calls, and code enforcement activities. The area includes some large vacant and underutilized properties that, when future development occurs the city, could ensure that the future development complies with city Development Standards, preserves the mission of the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport, and provides opportunities for housing and employment supportive of the city's goals.

When the city took control of the Standley Lake Water and Sanitation District, it signed an agreement that allowed the city to require annexation on the property owners before it would provide any new connections to the water and sewer system. This has proven to be a useful tool to ensure quality development and thoughtful extension of municipal utilities.

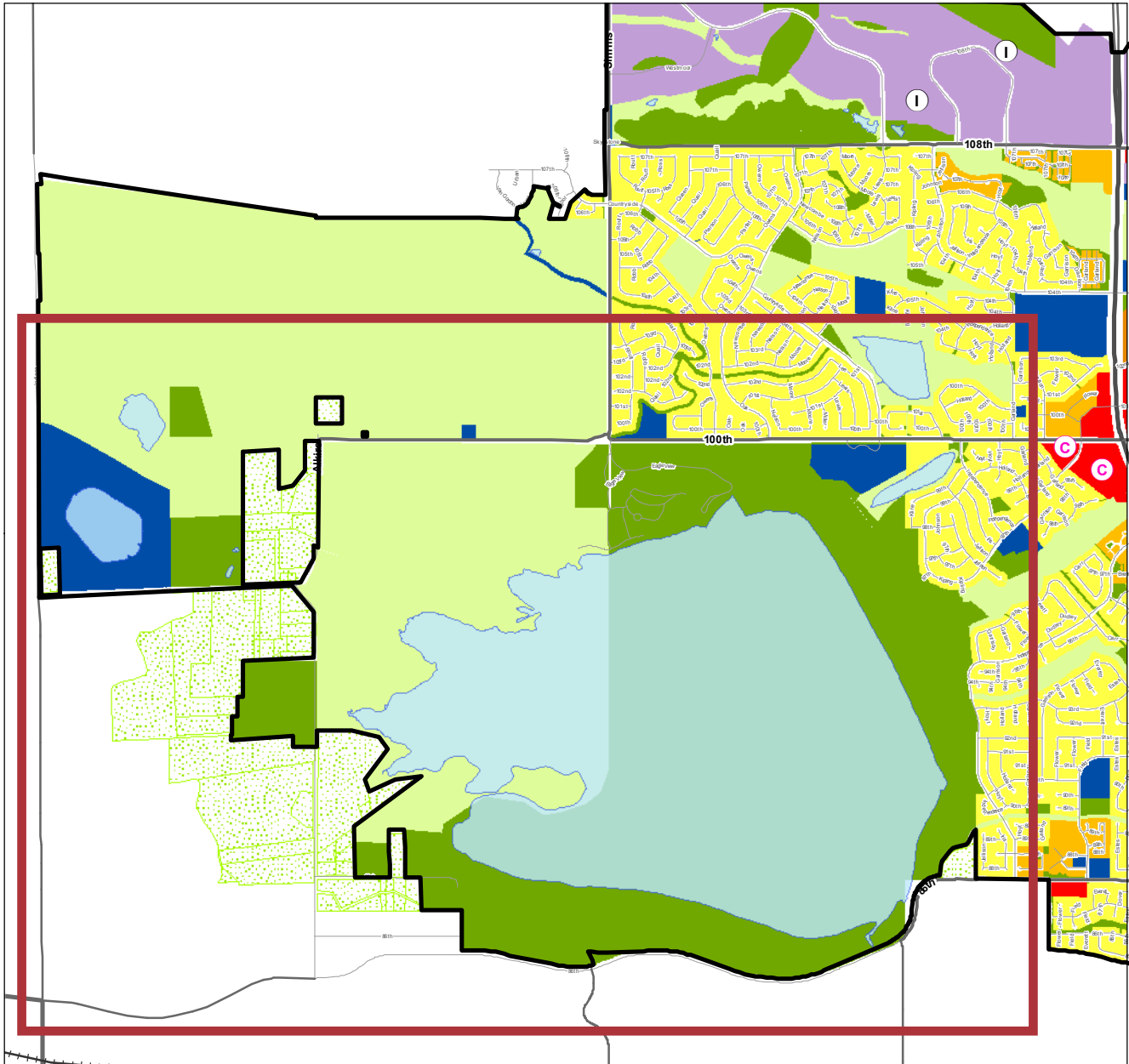
In addition to the expected impact on code enforcement resources, many of the residents care for livestock on their properties and that will increase the workload on the city's Animal Control Officers. Some commercial uses already exist in this area; however, revenue generation is unlikely to provide sufficient funds for activities such as street maintenance, let alone improvement costs.

Many residents of this area have engaged with Westminster City Council on growth related concerns, but municipal authority is generally limited to locations within the city limits. Should there be a desire to further manage growth, then annexation is necessary to accomplish this. It is recognized that some property owners in the area have identified a preference to retain the large lot semi-agricultural character of the area. Where development may occur, opportunities to maintain farm and ranch characteristics should be preserved, such as has been accomplished with the Heritage at Church Ranch senior housing.

STANDLEY LAKE AREA Legend

Figure D-6. Standley Lake Area

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Residential Estate | Neighborhood Office |
| Residential Low Density | Employment-Office/Institutional Campus |
| Residential Medium Density | Public/Quasi Public |
| Suburban Multi-Family | Commercial |
| Urban Multi-Family | Mixed-Use Activity Center |
| Mixed-Use Neighborhood | Parks/Golf Courses |
| Specific Area Plan | Open Space/Creek Corridor |
| Employment-Flex | Agricultural/Conservation Area |
- (C) Commercial Mixed Use (S) Service Commercial (I) Industrial



Description:

The Standley Lake Area is a large grouping of 52 parcels covering 439.7 acres that are located in the western portion of the city. The area is bounded by Independence Street on the east, Indiana Street on the west, West 87th Avenue on the south, and West 100th Avenue on the north. The parcels north of West 96th Avenue are enclaves within the city.

Land Use:

The parcels located in this area are primarily large residential acreages with a few agricultural and industrial uses. The largest non-residential uses are horse boarding. The parcels are all located within Jefferson County and are zoned P-D, A-1, A-2, and SR-2.

Transportation:

This area does not feature convenient access to a highway or any major arterial roads. The smaller arterials and local streets in this area include West 100th Avenue, West 96th Avenue, West 86th Parkway, West 88th Avenue, Simms Street, Alkire Street, and Indiana Street. A large portion of the streets are maintained by either the City of Westminster or the City of Arvada. Some of the streets and small roads are maintained by Jefferson County, but they are likely not constructed in accordance with City of Westminster specifications. The future Jefferson Parkway, if constructed, would run parallel to Indiana Street and potentially result in significant development interest in the area.

Utility Provisions:

None of the parcels in this area are within the city's Water Service Area. The city would only likely be able to extend water service to the parcel at the south east corner of Standley Lake. The rest of the parcels are served by wells and septic systems. The primary interest in annexation of these lands is to ensure adequate protection of Standley Lake, which provides drinking water to over 300,000 residents in Adams and Jefferson Counties.

Community Services:

The Standley Lake Area is served by the Arvada Fire Department and Jefferson County Sheriff's office. The city responds to service calls in this area as a large part of this area is within the city limits. Despite the extreme geographic reach of some of these sites, the code enforcement impacts are anticipated to be minimal since the properties would remain large acreages with minimal additional development, if any.

Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

This area contains the Standley Lake Regional Park and the Westminster Hills Open Space, however smaller neighborhood parks are only found in neighboring Arvada. Many of these properties could serve as valuable additions to the city's Open Space. The closest city recreation center is Westview Recreation Center and the nearest city library is College Hill Library. Through the Colorado Libraries Collaborate! Program, any Colorado public

library cardholder can check out materials from any participating library in the state. Many residents use Jefferson County's Standley Lake Branch located adjacent to 88th Avenue and Kipling Street.

Summary:

Parcels within this area are sensible for annexation into the city for environmental factors. The parcels are primarily located upstream of Standley Lake and if developed could pose additional risk to the city's water supply. When the Jefferson Parkway is constructed, the interest in developing these parcels would increase. Additionally, if the parcels were under city jurisdiction, other potential hazards such as oil and gas extraction activities could be mitigated or eliminated.

Due to the distance from the city's Water Service Area and police and fire services, it would be unlikely that the city could adequately support intensification of development within this area without expending a large amount of capital to construct additional infrastructure. In 2016 the city also signed an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Arvada that put a boundary of annexation in place to ensure that Arvada would not annex and develop these parcels.

SHAW HEIGHTS AND WESTMINSTER HEIGHTS AREA

Figure D-7. Shaw Heights and Westminster Heights Area

Legend

	Residential Estate		Neighborhood Office
	Residential Low Density		Employment-Office/Institutional Campus
	Residential Medium Density		Public/Quasi Public
	Suburban Multi-Family		Commercial
	Urban Multi-Family		Mixed-Use Activity Center
	Mixed-Use Neighborhood		Parks/Golf Courses
	Specific Area Plan		Open Space/Creek Corridor
	Employment-Flex		Agricultural/Conservation Area



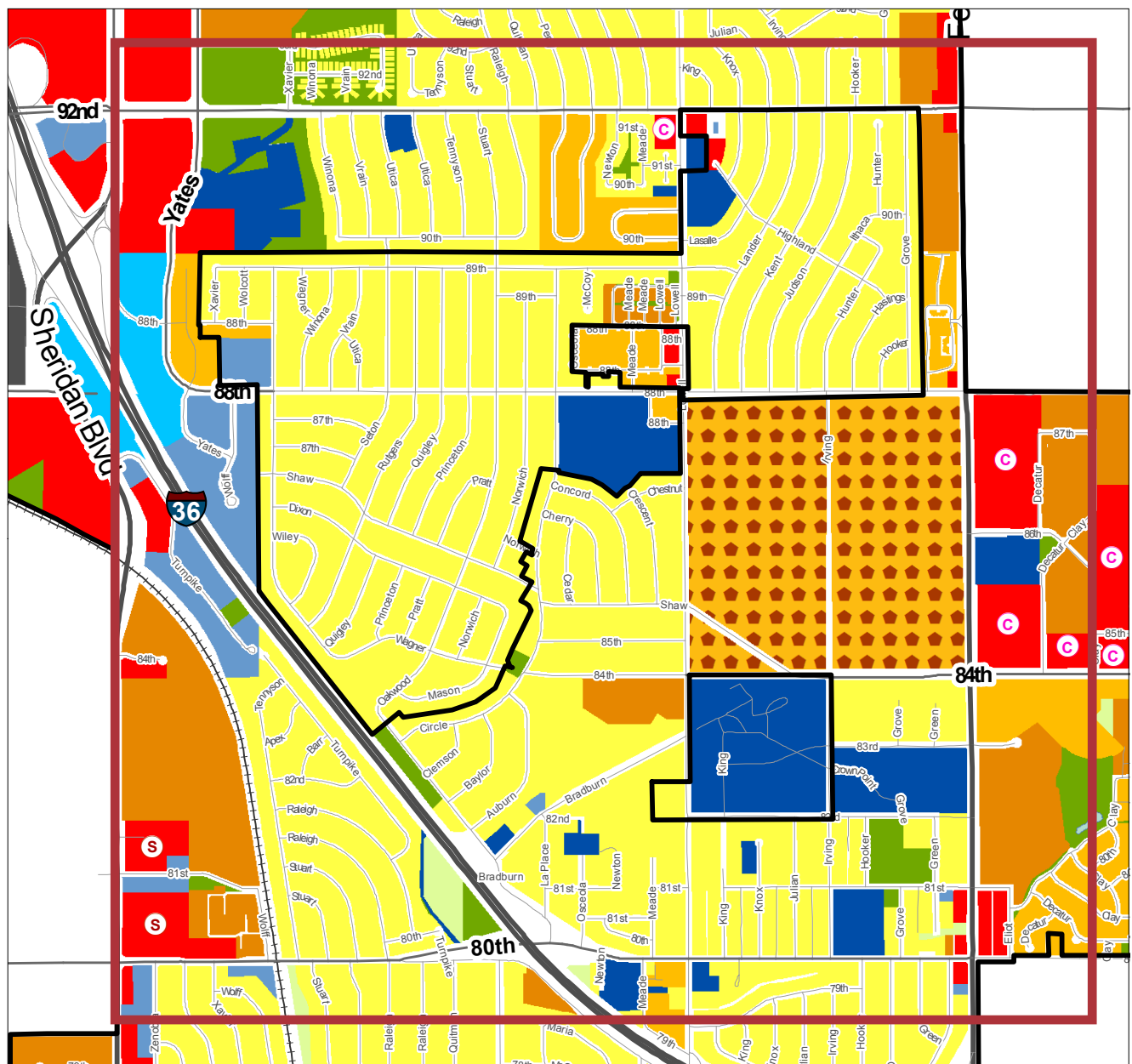
Commercial Mixed Use



Service Commercial



Industrial



Description:

The Shaw Heights and Westminster Heights Area is a grouping of contiguous parcels of the Shaw Heights Subdivision, the remaining unincorporated land owned by the Pillar of Fire and a small parcel on West 80th Avenue. Collectively this evaluation area include 1,687 parcels consisting of 378.6 acres. The area is bounded by Clay Street on the east, Yates Street on the west, West 80th Avenue on the south, and West 92nd Avenue on the north. The Shaw Heights and Pillar of Fire parcels are enclaves within the city. The western portions of this area are convenient to the Downtown Westminster Focus Area and Sheridan Park-n-Ride facility.

Land Use:

A vast majority of the parcels in this area are developed as detached single family homes. Within the Shaw Heights subdivisions, duplexes, townhomes, and some limited multifamily can be found. The Pillar of Fire parcel contains the remaining land owned by the church that was not previously annexed into the city boundary. That parcel has several residences, the historic “Westminster Castle,” and the private Belleview Christian School. Within this area, there are several commercial parcels. All of these parcels are located within Adams County and the zoning designations include P-U-D, A-2, C-1, C-2, C-4, R-1-C, R-2, R-3, and R-4. The area is expected to remain primarily low and medium residential densities as shown in Figure D-7.

Transportation:

These parcels have access to US 36 and arterial streets including Federal Boulevard, West 92nd Avenue, and West 80th Avenue. Within the Shaw Heights subdivision, many of the local and collector streets are maintained by Adams County. These roads account for a sizeable amount of lane miles that if annexed would become the city’s responsibility for maintenance. The Sheridan Park-n-Ride provides express bus service to Downtown Denver and Boulder, providing regional connections to areas of employment for residents of this area.

Utility Provisions:

The parcels in this area are all within the city’s Water Service Area and they are connected or can connect to the city’s water and sewer system as “out of city” users. If the city were to consider annexing these out of city accounts, a financial analysis should be done to determine the impact to fee revenue as out of city users pay a higher fee for water than in city users.

Community Services:

These unincorporated parcels are served by the Adams County Fire Protection District and the Adams County Sheriff’s Office. The local Adams County Fire Protection District station is currently shutdown and is not in active service. The city frequently responds to calls for police, fire, and EMS service in this area due to the distance from the fire stations and Adams County Sheriff’s Office.

Code enforcement would be significantly impacted if these areas were annexed due to conditions such as varying degrees of maintenance and upkeep, a large number of home-based businesses that would not typically be authorized within the city, and inconsistent standards under which construction was completed. Furthermore, the sheer volume of potential requests for service resulting from the addition of over 5,000 residents from this area to the city who could file nuisance complaints and push for abatement is beyond the current available resources of the Community Preservation Division. Additional staffing would likely be necessary if there was a desire to maintain the current level of service for code enforcement across the city, as the annexation of this area would consume a notable portion of overall existing code enforcement capacity.

Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

This area lacks access to open space and trail facilities and has very few parks available. The community has a need for neighborhood and community parks. City Center Park, Oakwood Park and Westminster Swim and Fitness facilities are near this area. The Irving Street Library is the nearest city library. Some area residents use the 15-acre Rotary Park maintained by the Hyland Hills Park & Recreation District.

Summary:

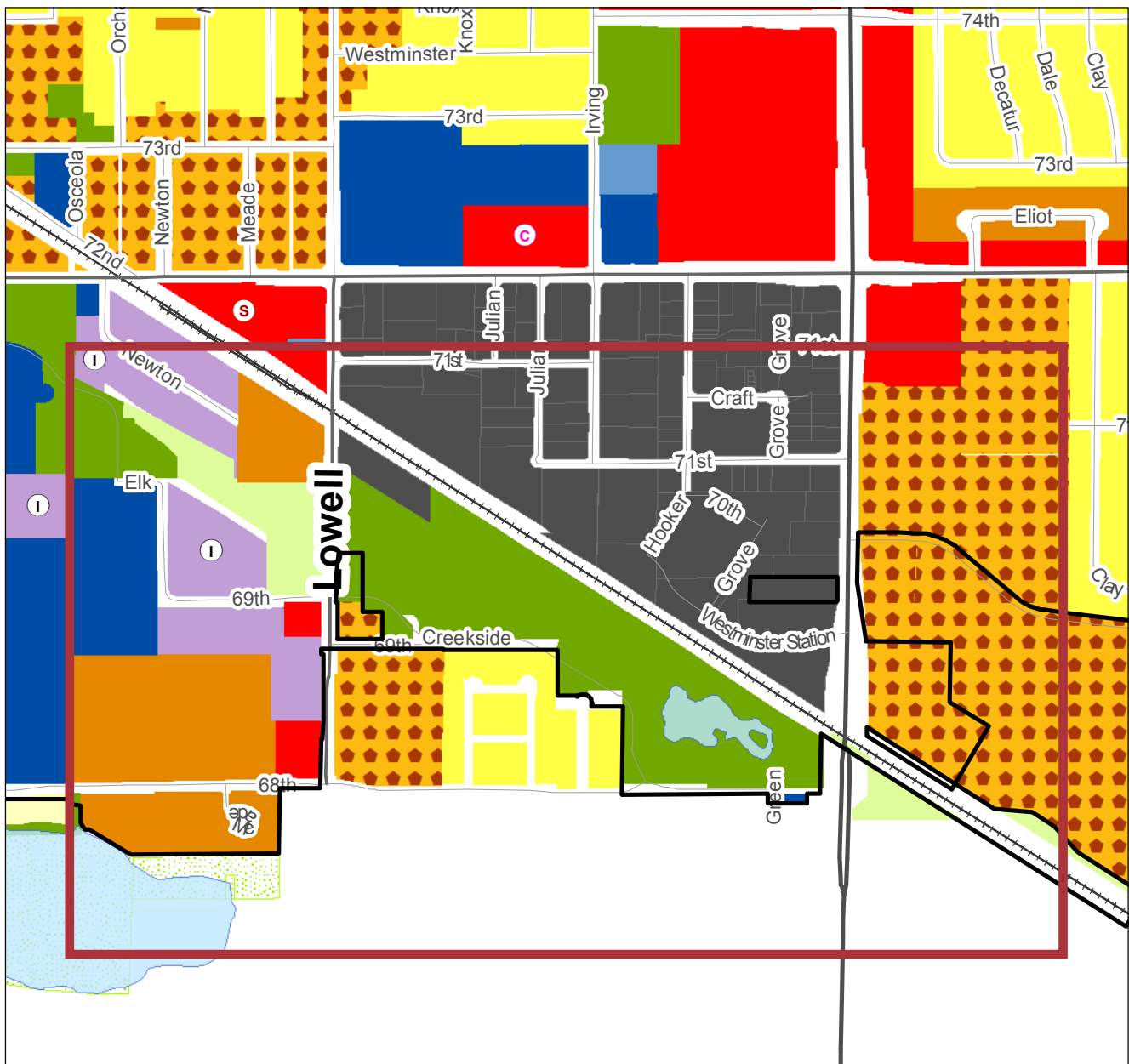
While the city does provide some Fire, EMS, and Police services for this area, the large amount of County maintained streets would be an added burden to the city's streets maintenance responsibilities. The small amount of commercial properties in this area would likely not generate sufficient revenue to pay for the additional street maintenance costs. Given the position of these homes within the city, it is likely the city is realizing a large portion of the sales tax from these residents already. As discussed above, code enforcement impacts are expected to be considerable. Annexing the Shaw Heights and Pillar of Fire Area would likely represent a high cost of service for the city. However, it is recognized that some residents have expressed a need and desire for municipal services that are beyond the capacity of Adams County.

WESTMINSTER STATION VICINITY AREA

Figure D-8. Westminster Station Vicinity Area

Legend

	Residential Estate		Neighborhood Office
	Residential Low Density		Employment-Office/Institutional Campus
	Residential Medium Density		Public/Quasi Public
	Suburban Multi-Family		Commercial
	Urban Multi-Family		Mixed-Use Activity Center
	Mixed-Use Neighborhood		Parks/Golf Courses
	Specific Area Plan		Open Space/Creek Corridor
	Employment-Flex		Agricultural/Conservation Area
	Commercial Mixed Use		Service Commercial
			Industrial



Description:

The Westminster Station Vicinity Area is a grouping of 16 parcels near the city's Commuter Rail Station totaling 22.5 acres. The area is bounded by Decatur Street on the east, Lowell Boulevard on the west, West 67th Place on the south, and West 71st Avenue on the north. Only one parcel is an enclave within the city. These sites are adjacent to the Westminster Station Focus Area.

Within the context of the Denver Metro region, this is a very central location within short commute time to multiple areas of employment, places of higher education and a variety of community institutions. Areas of Adams County to the south have already witnessed a northward creep of higher density urban infill development radiating out from the Highlands and Berkeley neighborhoods of Denver.

Land Use:

These parcels include some residential uses, but the majority are commercial uses. The current uses include self-storage, auto parts stores, and a gas station and convenience store. All of these parcels are located within Adams County and the zoning designations include P-U-D, C-1, C-5, R-2, and I-1. The parcel owned by the city that is within the Little Dry Creek Open Space and trail system had an application for annexation filed in 2015. Redevelopment of these sites should be considered in context with the Westminster Station Specific Plan, objectives identified for Historic Westminster and the Federal Boulevard Corridor Plan currently underway. Future annexation of key commercial properties on the east side of Federal Boulevard adjacent to West 70th Ave. would provide greater assurance that redevelopment is done in a manner that supports the public and private investments at Westminster Station. Additional annexations further south along Federal Boulevard are cautioned due to small parcel size with fractured ownership and a number of land uses and business types that would be non-conforming to the W.M.C.

Transportation:

These parcels have good access to US 36 and arterial streets including Federal Boulevard, Lowell Boulevard, and West 72nd Avenue. The area includes many streets that are already maintained by the City of Westminster. Federal Boulevard is maintained by the State of Colorado. Streets that would be included in an annexation would not result in a significant amount of lane miles that would become the city's responsibility for maintenance. The area is also easily accessible to Westminster Station, featuring 15-minute commuter rail service to Downtown Denver.

Utility Provisions:

Only a few of the parcels in this area are within the city's Water Service Area. Most of these parcels are connected to the Crestview Water and Sanitation District, which receives water from Denver Water. Infrastructure in this area is generally very old and, as

it nears the end of its useful service life, will be an expensive endeavor to repair and/or replace while continuing to ensure safe and reliable water and wastewater service.

Community Services:

These unincorporated parcels are served by the Adams County Fire Protection District and the Adams County Sheriff's Office. The local Adams County Fire Protection District station is currently shutdown and not in active service. The city does not often respond to calls for police, fire, and EMS service in this area, however Westminster Fire Station No. 1 is located within a mile or less of each parcel. Given the relatively few numbers of parcels in this area, impacts to code enforcement activities are anticipated to be minimal.

Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

This area has convenient access to the new Westminster Station Area park and the connecting trails. The southern portion of the city does not have a sizeable amount of open space or trails, but the Little Dry Creek trail does provide some access and eventually will be the backbone of a regional trail system, as described in Chapter 5 of the Comprehensive Plan. The small number of residences are not likely to generate a huge demand for parks and recreation needs. The MAC and Westminster Swim and Fitness facility are near this area. The Irving Street Library is the nearest city library. Hyland Hills Parks & Recreation District maintains the Donald Critchfield Sports Complex at Hidden Lakes that is also a recreational amenity for this area.

Summary:

The parcels that are enclaves within the city and the parcels that are within the Westminster Water Service area would be good candidates for a future annexation. The other remaining parcels should be further studied to determine if the city can equitably serve the properties. The parcels adjacent to Lowell and 69th Avenue used for self-storage parcels offer a good opportunity for redevelopment, and when such parcels do redevelop, it is desirable that they redevelop under the city's Development Standards and form a southern gateway into Westminster Station.